Infant-baptiſm

FROM

HEAVEN,

AND NOT OF

MEN.

OR,

A moderate Diſcourſe concerning the Baptiſm of the Infant-ſeed of Believers.

Whereunto is prefixed,

A large introductory Preface, preparing the Readers way to a more profitable peruſal of the enſuing Treatiſe.

By *Joſeph Whiſton.*

Ἐγὼ μὲν ὑδατι βαπτίζω ὑμᾶς, ἔρχεται δὲ ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου, οὗ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἱκανὸς λῦσαι τὸν ἱμάντα τῶν ὑποδημάτων αὐτοῦ, αὐτὸς ὑμᾶς βαπτίσει ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ πυρί, Luk. 3. 16.

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THE PREFACE TO THE READER

Christian Reader,

IT is an old and true saying, *Veritas non quærit Angulos*, Truth is neither afraid nor ashamed to be seen, though thereby she be exposed to the severest and most critical tryals and examinations of men, neither is she at all desirous to appear in such a dress, as that thereby she may insinuate her self into the affections of men for this end, that through their interest in, and byassing influence upon the understanding, it may be bribed to a partiality on her side; her evidence and power is such, as makes that needless, *Magna est & prævalebit*: In the ensuing Treatise thou hast a Doctrine and practice maintained, which, I doubt not, will be owned by our Lord Jesus Christ in the day of his appearing, to be part of that Faith once delivered to the Saints, for

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which it is his will they ſhould earneſtly contend; which Doctrine and practice, as I have endeavoured to preſent to thy view, in the ſole light of Divine evidence, rationally deduced from that great Luminary of the Scriptures, without immixing any thing of humane Eloquence, for the bribing the underſtanding by ſubtle insinuations upon thy affections, (a courſe, which as my natural Genius leads me not unto, ſo my indigency, as to abillities, prohibits my attempting of) ſo the foreſtalling thy Judgment, by any ſubtle artifices of one kind or another, is none of my deſign in the preſent Preface. There are only three things, I conceive neceſſary to be done, to prepare the Readers way to a more profitable peruſal of the Diſcourſe here tendered to him.

First, That *I* ſhould indeavour to remove, at leaſt allay, that prejudice that may poſſibly ariſe in the minds of ſome againſt it, as coming abroad at ſuch a time as this is, whereby they might be kept from that due peruſal and through examination and weighing of what is here tendred to them as is neceſſary, in order to their reaping that benefit deſigned to them by it; and thus, though there are ſeveral prejudices may poſſibly ariſe in the minds of men, according to their previous perſwaſions, relating to the practice here pleaded for, yet I ſhall only take notice of that, which may ariſe from the ſeeming unſeaſonableneſs, of ſending forth a Diſcourſe of this nature at ſuch a time as this

is,

is, and as affairs now ſtand with the parties, between whom this controverſie hath of late years been more eſpecially agitated, poſſibly thou mayſt think the Author rather deſerves a Cenſure of, at leaſt, indiſcretion, than the Diſcourſe it ſelf a ſerious peruſal and examination.

And it cannot be denied, but that an undertaking of this nature, at ſuch a time, doth carry, and that in ſeveral reſpects, a very great ſhew of unſeaſonableneſs in it, and had not the ſence and apprehenſion of the preſent ſtate of affairs detained me under an irreſolution as to its publication, this Diſcourſe might have ſeen the light much ſooner than now it doth; and yet had I not had the approbation of thoſe, whoſe Judgments I had reaſon to attend unto, it had not now, no nor ever, for ought I know, appeared in ſo publick a way as now it doth: But ſeeing it is thus come abroad, let me in brief give the Reader an account of the ground of my proceedings herein: Yet I conceive it unneceſſary, to trouble the Reader with an account of the ſeveral occaſions, through which my thoughts came at firſt ſo to be engaged, and after to be carried on in a more thorow ſearch into this Controverſie; I ſhall only give him an account of the ground of my ſending abroad this Diſcourſe (wherein he will find the reſult of that ſearch I have made) at this time. And in general take it thus:

Upon further and more ſerious adviſements with my ſelf, and conſultations with others,

I could not conceive, how the ſending of it abroad, though at ſuch a time, ſhould be juſtly accounted ſo unſeaſonable, as upon the firſt view it may, and for a while to me it did ſeem to be. When the practice here pleaded for, by the unanimous conſent of all parties, lyes from among the Fundamentals of Chriſtian Religion, and conſequently, ſuppoſing the worſt, it ſhould at laſt be found to be unſcriptural; the contrary whereunto I am moſt confident of (whether groundleſs or no, let the intelligent and impartial Reader judge) yet the conſcientious imbracement of it cannot be deſtructive to the Souls of men, when nothing is brought to light, beyond what was of publick and general cognizance before, when the judgment and practice of the contrary minded is no way concerned in the ſufferings they are ſubject or liable to, and conſequently, the detection of their error cannot be rationally ſuppoſed to further their ſufferings, when no new Controverſie is ſtarted, and conſequently, no new rents or diviſions like to be made, beyond what have been of ſo long continuance; how the appearing in publick of ſuch a Diſcourſe upon this Subject ſhould at this time, or any other time, be accounted much unſeaſonable, I could give no rational account, either to my ſelf or to others: As for the manner of handling it, I am not conſcious to my ſelf of having given any juſt cauſe of offence unto any; what thou wilt meet with here, is argumentative, not invective, aiming at thy information and confirmation, in what I verily

judge

judge to be the Truth, not thy prejudice either in temporals or ſpirituals: In a word, unleſs the naked propoſal of my own perſwaſion, relating to the Controverſie here debated, with the Scripture evidence, captivating my underſtanding into that perſwaſion, can be grievous or offenſive unto any, I cannot conceive how the enſuing Diſcourſe can be.

But it may be it may be ſaid, There is yet a double inconvenience, or a twofold ill conſequence may ariſe from the publication of a Diſcourſe of this nature at ſuch a time.

Firſt, The minds of Chriſtians will be in danger to be diverted from what is more properly their work, and about which they ought more eſpecially to be taken up.

To that I anſwer, I wiſh the enſuing Papers may find the minds of Chriſtians ſo well imployed, as that ſuch a divertion would be indeed prejudicial to them; but be it ſo, as in reſpect of ſome, I hope, it may be, yet the exerciſe of a little prudence will prevent that inconvenience; and let me here caution the Reader to take heed, that he do not by this, or any other Controverſie, divert his mind from the more weighty concernments of his Soul; take heed thou do not ſo apply thy mind to, nor ſuffer thy thoughts to be taken up with any matters of controverſie, as to neglect thy growth in Grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, but, I ſay, a little Chriſtian prudence will direct in this, and obviate the inconvenience ſuggeſted.

But

But ſecondly, It will be ſaid, The appearing thus in publick may occaſion the revival of theſe Controverſies, which ſeem now almoſt laid aſide and forgotten among the People of God, and conſequently may renew, heighten and increaſe thoſe diviſions, which heretofore have been of ſuch ſad conſequence, as to their unanimous and concordant practice of the main things of Religion.

To this I ſhall anſwer, I am not altogether without hope of the quite contrary, *viz.* That it may be of ſome uſe for the obtaining and promoting union among them,

There is a double union that the People of God are to labour after,

Firſt, An union of judgment and practice, that they may think, ſpeak, and do the ſame things.

Secondly, An union in heart and affection, that wherein they do differ in judgment and practice, they may bear with, and forbear one another in love.

Now what means can have a more direct tendency, or be more effectual (will the Lord pleaſe to concur with his bleſſing) for the obtaining and promoting either of theſe kinds of union, than the holding forth with a Spirit of meekneſs what light is received from the Scriptures, about the things, wherein the difference and diſagreement is?

As for the former, 'tis utterly impoſſible ever to be attained among thoſe, who dare not, as we uſe to ſay, pin their faith upon other mens

sleeves, or practice hand over head, whatever is proposed to them, by any means exclusive of this; and with what confidence soever any attempts may be made to effect this union any other way, they will be found utterly unavailable, and probably issue in the quite contrary event to what is aimed at.

But suppose this first and most excellent kind of union, which we ought ultimately to aim at and endeavour, should not be attained, the same differences in judgment and practice should yet remain, yet methinks I may, yea, I cannot but rationally expect, that the latter, *viz.* of heart and affection, will be so far from being impeded and obstructed, that it will be considerably advanced and promoted, though dissenters may not come over to my judgment and practise by what is here offered, yet sure I may promise my self, without concurring the censure of being over confident of the Truth asserted, or the strength and validity of the Arguments produced for its confirmation, that it will be granted, that in case I do err, it is *cum ratione*, and that I have so much ground from Scripture to bottom my judgment and practice upon, as may acquit me, in the judgment of Charity, without stretching it beyond the bounds allowed in Scripture and warranted by Reason, from a wilful persisting in error; and I hardly know any thing more effectual for the maintaining love and friendship among dissenting Christians, then for them to be mutually satisfied in each other, that they do not dissent upon any other account then their

respective

respective conscientiousness of their duty towards God, which satisfaction can hardly be given in a more effectual manner, than by holding forth and declaring each to other the light they have received from the Scriptures of truth, captivating their judgments to the imbracement and practice of what they do differently imbrace and practice; so that I cannot but hope the sending abroad the ensuing Discourse, will be so far from reviving a Controversie, almost laid asleep and forgotten, to the disuniting of Christians, and heightening their differences and divisions, that it may be of some good use for the promoting the quite contrary end, *viz.* their uniting, if not in judgment, that they may be as the Apostle speaks, 1 *Cor.* 1. 10. κατηρτισμένοι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοΐ, καὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ γνώμῃ; *Perfectly joyned together in one mind and judgment*; yet they may live together, ἀνεχόμενοι ἀλλήλων ἐν ἀγάπῃ, *Ephes.* 4. 2. *forbearing one another in love*: And yet further let me add one thing more, which having its due consideration, may, if not wholly remove, yet much allay what prejudices of this nature may arise in the minds of men, and it is this; Times of afflictions, whether coming immediately from the hand of God, or mediately from the hand of man, are special times for every one to take a more through and impartial review of their respective wayts and practises, the Rod hath a voice which all are commanded to hear; *Hear the Rod, and who hath appointed it*, Micah 6. 9. What its voice is, or what it calls for at our hands, may be gathered partly

partly from what the God of Wisdom, or the only wise God declares to be his expectation, from those either over whom it is lift up in the threatning, or upon whom it is laid in the execution, and partly from what the men of wisdom, as the Prophet there speaks, have done in answer to this voice, what are Gods expectations he tells us, *Jer.* 8. 6. *I saith the Lord hearkened and heard, but no man spake aright*; and wherein they failed in speaking aright he tells us, *no man said, what have I done*, or which is of the same importance, what have I not done, what have I omitted and neglected that I ought to have done; the Rod calls to us to call our selves to an impartial account, wherein we have either come short of, or exceeded that Rule we ought to walk by, what men of wisdom have done in answer to this voice of the Rod, see in that *Lam.* 3. 40. *Let us search our ways and turn unto the Lord*; when God is searching after our sins, especially when the search is made by afflictions, when God hath us upon the rack, as *Job* seems to allude, *Job* 10. 6. sure it is our concernment to make a through and impartial search too: God threatens to search *Jerusalem* with Candles, *Zeph.* 1. 12. it is meant of his searching by afflictions: now God seems to have his Candle in his hand, he is searching *England* with Candles, he is in special searching the professing party in *England* with Candles; now it is an excellent observation of that worthy Expositor upon *Job*, saith he, *Troubles are so many Candles that God setteth up to search*

us

us by, and they will be as ſo many fires inkindled to conſume us with, in caſe we ſearch not our ſelves; but yet let me ſay, it is not the bare light of afflictions, without the concurring light of the Word and Spirit, that can diſcover to any their ſin; hence when God holds out the light of his Candle, it muſt needs be a very ſeaſonable time to hold forth the light of the Word, which being attended with the internal illumination of the Spirit, may diſcover that to be a ſin, which would not be owned ſo to be at another time; from what hath been ſaid, I cannot but hope, that what is here preſented to publick view, will by conſiderate perſons be ſo far from being accounted unſeaſonable, that it will be accounted in ſome ſort the more eſpecially ſeaſonable at ſuch a time as this. But ſuppoſe, notwithſtanding what hath been ſaid, the ſending abroad of theſe Papers at this time, ſhould by any be judged unſeaſonable, I have three things yet further to offer for my vindication.

Firſt, I conſidered, that for the Mind to hang in ſuſpence, and lye under the preſſure of fluctuating uncertainties about the mind and will of Chriſt, relating to the diſcharge of duty, is at any time grievous, but more eſpecially when the hand of God is lift up, and that I know is the caſe of ſome truly conſcientious Chriſtians, in reference to the practice here pleaded for, and I judged it my duty to yield unto them what relief my mean ability would reach unto.

Secondly,

Secondly, I conſidered that ſaying of the Wiſe man, *He that obſerveth the Wind ſhall not ſow, and he that regardeth the Clouds ſhall not reap*, Eccleſ. 11. 4. And whether I might live to ſee a more ſeaſonable time was altogether uncertain unto me; and for me to obſerve the Wind, and ſtand gazing on the Clouds, till overtaken by the night of death, where no man can work, and laid to ſleep in the duſt, and thereby have loſt my ſeaſon for the ſowing the Seed, that Seed, of which I may and muſt ſay it is, *Meſhec* as that word, *Pſal.* 126. 6. is rendred by *Junius* and ſome others, it is, *Semen acquiſitum*, *Semen aliunde comparatum*, Seed that I have through Grace obtained from anothers ſtore, I hope I may truly ſay from his, who, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Miniſters ſeed to the ſower, and bread to the eater*; and that to uſe the Author aforementioned his words, *Prece & pretio*, yet not ſo much of Silver and Gold, as of that, which by the Teſtimony of the Holy Ghoſt himſelf is the iſſue of much ſtudy, *viz.* wearineſs, and I may add, wearing away of the fleſh; I was ſaying, ſhould *I* have obſerved the Winds, and ſtood gazing on the Clouds, till loſt my ſeaſon to ſow this ſame Seed contained in the enſuing Treatiſe, I could not have expected to reap when the Harveſt comes, what now through Grace I can in ſome meaſure live in the comfortable expectations of, ſeaſons loſt, though ſomething unſeaſonable prove a loſs to the Husbandman when the harveſt comes.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The ſending forth theſe Papers was neceſſary to prepare a way to, and lay a foundation for a few practical ſheets, which, if the Lord vouchſafe life and opportunity, may follow, wherein I intend, as the Lord ſhall aſſiſt, to make a more full enquiry into theſe four things.

Firſt, What are the Reaſons of Gods appointing the application of the Token of the Covenant to the Infant ſeed of his people.

Secondly, What are the benefits and advantages ariſing to them thereby,

Thirdly, What is the duty of Parents towards their Children, as incorporated by Baptiſm into the Myſtical Body of Chriſt, as viſible.

And fourthly, What is the improvement that Children themſelves may and ought to make of their Baptiſm, applyed unto them in their infancy, as they grow up to years of maturity which things I could not fitly ſpeak unto before their Covenant-intereſt and right to the Sign and Token of the Covenant ariſing therefrom was proved; ſo that the appearing thus in publick, in the defence of the practice of Infant-baptiſm, was in ſome ſort neceſſary unto me.

Secondly, Another thing I conceive neceſſary for the preparing the Readers way to a more profitable peruſal of the inſuing Treatiſe, is, to make ſome enquiries, what may have had, and ſtill hath too great an intereſt in the ſo far prevailing

vailing of the judgment and practice of lying opposite to that here pleaded for; 'tis, I confess, something strange to me, whence it should come to pass, that so many, and those, at least many of them, truly conscientious Christians, should at so easie a rate part with, and give up their Childrens priviledge, as to interest in the Covenant, and the Token thereof, and so readily take up an opinion and practice divesting them thereof.

Three things have often occurred to my thoughts, as rendring this matter of wonder unto me.

First, The plain evidence, as to my understanding, given in by the Scriptures to that their priviledge.

Secondly, The utter silence of the Scriptures, as to any express, yea, or plainly deduced consequential denial of it to them.

Thirdly, That tenderness of affection natural (and sure Grace destroyes not Nature) to Parents towards their Children.

Hence notwithstanding what is urged on their parts from the Scripture, yet I cannot but conceive there is either something wholly excentrical to the Question it self, or some irregularity in the management of their enquiries, in reference thereunto, that hath had, and still hath a considerable interest, at least, in manyes rejection of the Truth pleaded for, and their imbracing the opinion and practice opposite thereunto.

Now it may not be altogether unprofitable to make some inquiry what that should be, that so the Reader being forewarned may disintangle himself, and have his mind more free to attend to, and impartially weigh what is here tendered to him, and upon a serious enquiry, I conceive, these six things may be assigned, as of the importance mentioned,

First, I cannot but think it must in part be imputed to a want of that tenderness of affection towards Relations, attended with the want of a right apprehension and true sense of the worth and excellency of spiritual Blessings, and Covenant-priviledges that Christians ought to labour after; the Apostle mentions it as one of the evils of the last times, That men shall be without natural affection.

Now though this evil prevail not in the hearts of truly gratious Souls to a predominancy, as it may and doth in the hearts of such, who have only a form of Godliness; yet it is too usually found, that truly gracious Souls are more or less corrupted by the Epidemical evils of the times and places where they live, in infectious times their blood and humors may be vitiated and corrupted, to the producing of some evil symptomes, upon whom yet the infection prevails not, to the breaking out into a Disease, to the taking away of their lives. Thus I cannot but think that this evil, of the want of natural affections, too far prevails in, though it prevails not over truly gracious Souls, to the giving a very great advantage to the so far spreading

ſpreading of the opinion and practice aforementioned; yet I do not ſay, neither would I be underſtood, as though I did ſuppoſe that this ſame evil hath been, or is the cauſe or occaſion of all their rejection of the practice pleaded for, and complying with the oppoſite opinion and practice, who yet do reject the one and imbrace the other: I do not doubt, but there are many among the contrary minded, who are perſons of much tenderneſs of affection towards their Children, and have in a good meaſure a right apprehenſion and due ſence of the worth and excellency of ſpiritual Bleſſings and Covenant-priviledges; nor yet would I be underſtood, as though I did ſuppoſe that this evil were only to be found among the perſons we now ſpeak of, no, *I* fear the ſame evil prevails too far in many of thoſe, who yet imbrace, yea, ſtand up in the defence of the practice of Infant-baptiſm, and though it doth not appear the ſame way, yet other wayes it doth; Inſtances evidencing this are too obvious than here to need a recital, the Diſeaſe is Epidemical, though appearing in ſome one way, and in others another way; but this I ſay; I do verily judge, that the ſo univerſal prevailing of this ſame evil, in this latter Age of the World will be found to have been one thing giving riſe to, and furthering the ſucceſs of the opinion & practice here oppoſed; let but Parents get a due tenderneſs of affection towards their Children, and a right apprehenſion and due ſenſe of the worth and excellency of ſpiritual priviledges, and their minds will be much diſpoſed

to an impartial weighing what is offered on the behalf of this practice of Infant-baptiſm.

I am aware it will be retorted by my Oppoſers, That it is a fond, fooliſh and irregular affection towards Children, that hath bribed our underſtanding, and byaſſed us to a perſwaſion, that the Scripture holds forth ſome benefit or priviledge to them beyond what indeed it doth, our miſtakes ariſe from the byaſſing influences that theſe affections have upon our underſtandings and judgments.

But to this I ſhall only ſay, That it is not altogether unworthy our Obſervation, that Providence ſhould call forth ſuch to appear in defence of this practice, who cannot be rationally ſuppoſed to have lain under the byaſs of any ſuch irregular affections; and as for others, who, it is true, might more rationally be ſuppoſed to lye under the force of ſuch a byaſs, yet their Writings ſufficiently declare, they had judgment as well as affection, and their lives and converſations evidence they had conſcience as well as judgment; their Writings ſhew they had ability to diſcern truth from error, and their lives ſhew their affections could not byaſs them to practice, but according as their judgments by Scripture evidence were convinced: There is then no rational ground for any to ſuppoſe, that our imbracement of, and appearing for the practice under conſideration, hath been, or is from any

Mr. *Baxter*, Mr. *Cooke*, when they wrote, and my ſelf at preſent being Batchelors.

any ſuch irregular workings of affection as is ſuggeſted; the danger lyes on the other hand: If then we would underſtand the mind of Chriſt, in reference to this practice here contended for, labour to get a due tenderneſs of affection towards Children, with a right apprehenſion and due ſenſe of the worth and excellency of ſpiritual priviledges: a due and a regular working of the affections towards any good tendered in the Covenant of Grace, hath a ſpecial ſubſerviency to our receiving of light from God through the Scriptures, in and about his will concerning our duty relating to our enjoyment of that good.

Secondly, That which hath contributed not a little to the giving riſe to, and furthering the prevailing of the opinion and practice here oppoſed, hath been and is the confounding ſome either ſuppoſed or real irregularities in or attending the adminiſtration of Baptiſm to Infants, with the practice it ſelf, to mention theſe two things.

Firſt, The manner of its adminiſtration.

Secondly, The Subjects it hath been and frequently is adminiſtred unto.

For the firſt, How oft is it found, that perſons of weaker judgments are prevailed with to reject the practice of Infant-baptiſm it ſelf, by a ſpecious Argument that yet only lyes againſt the way and manner of its adminiſtration among thoſe, who hold and maintain that practice; hence it may be obſerved, how that way and manner is pitched upon and pleaded

againſt, that to the outward appearance ſeems, and is ſuppoſed by the perſons making uſe of this plea, to have the leaſt countenance from Scripture; and thus the way and manner pitched upon is, that of ſprinkling, which way and manner of adminiſtration, though diſuſed by many, if not generally by all, that with the greateſt ſtrength of Scripture Arguments have aſſerted the practice it ſelf; yet is urged by the contrary minded, as though the only way and manner of its adminiſtration among the *Pedobaptiſts*; hence are thoſe frequent invectives againſt Infant-ſprinkling ſcattered up and down in the Writings, aud too common in the mouths of our Oppoſers; and for the latter, how apt are people, being told and perſwaded, that themſelves or others, as the Seed of unbelieving Parents, had no right to Baptiſm, to be induced to believe, that no Infants, let the Parents be what they will, have any better right than themſelves or others, born of ſuch Parents, had; and hence perceiving the undueneſs of their own Baptiſm in their infancy, are eaſily brought to believe the undueneſs of the Baptiſm of Infants in the general: And it is true, there are ſome other things (the irregularity of which as *I* ſhall not deny, ſo their refutation comes not within the compaſs of my preſent buſineſs) appertaining to the adminiſtration of Baptiſm to Infants, as by ſome it is adminiſtred, that give a like advantage to the ſucceſs of the opinion and practice here oppoſed.

But

But now whether the Infant-ſeed of believing Parents ought to be baptized, is one Queſtion.

How or after what manner they ought to be baptized is another.

What Parents may be reputed to be Believers, ſo as that their Infant-ſeed may upon their account be baptized, is a third.

Now it is the firſt of theſe Queſtions only, that is diſcuſſed in the inſuing Treatiſe; neither is it at all neceſſary, that either of the two latter ſhould be taken notice of, or touched upon, in order to the finding out the mind and will of Chriſt relating unto this: Errors and irregularities, ſuppoſing them to be really ſo, in or attending the adminiſtration of Baptiſm, ought to be reformed, and not pleaded againſt the practiſe it ſelf: All therefore that I ſhall ſay to this is, let none confound what ought to be diſtinctly conſidered; labour firſt to find out the mind of Chriſt, as to the practiſe it ſelf, as abſtractly conſidered, without conſideration had to thoſe various Queſtions, the determination of which is of no uſe at all for the right determination of this; and having found out the mind of Chriſt relating to this firſt Queſtion, then the conſideration of the other will be more proper and ſeaſonable; the right methodizing of things highly conduceth to a right underſtanding the mind of Chriſt, reſpective to our duty, when the confounding or jumbling things together, that are of a diſtinct conſideration, ſubjects to great miſtakes.

Thirdly, That which hath had, and hath a a conſiderable intereſt in the giving riſe to, and furthering the ſucceſs of the opinion and practiſe here oppoſed, is the taking up particular Inſtances and Examples of perſons baptized, in the primitive times, upon their perſonal profeſſion of Faith and Repentance, without regard had to the caſe and condition of the perſons ſo baptized, antecedent to their Baptiſm, and conſequently without conſidering the true reaſon and ground of their Baptiſme at that age, and upon ſuch a profeſſion and taking them as a full explication of that Commiſſion of Chriſt, warranting the application of Baptiſm, under the new Teſtament adminiſtration, as well negative, ſhewing who ought not to be baptized, as poſitive, ſhewing who ought to be baptized. And hence two things are inferred and concluded.

Firſt, That a ſolemn profeſſion of Faith and Repentance ought to precede the application of Baptiſm.

Secondly, That none ought to be baptized but upon the precedency of ſuch a profeſſion.

But now let the caſes and conditions of the perſons, whoſe examples are produced, be conſidered, and let the true reaſon and ground of their Baptiſm at ſuch an age, and upon ſuch a profeſſion, be inquired into: and thus we ſhall find, that the perſons we are now ſpeaking of, were either ſuch as were Members of the Jewiſh Church, as the natural Jews, and Gentile Proſelites,

lites, or elſe they were ſuch, who were converted from among the Gentiles. As for the caſe of the Gentiles, the reaſon and ground of their *Baptiſm* at ſuch an age, and upon ſuch a profeſſion, is obvious to all, and when any are ſtill converted from among the Heathens, and brought over to the imbracement of Chriſtianity, 'tis readily granted they are to be baptized according to the Inſtances produced; but from thence it cannot with any ſhew of reaſon be concluded, that ſuch a profeſſion muſt univerſally antecede the application of Baptiſm; and as for the caſe of the Jews and Proſelytes, who before were Members of the Church, and anſwerably had no need of any new admiſſion into it, the Church ſtill remaining one and the ſame, the caſe and condition of none, ſince the deſolution of the Jewiſh Eccleſiaſtical Polity can poſſibly be imagined to anſwer thereunto, or correſpond therewith, and therefore the Inſtances produced, either of Jews or Gentile Proſelytes being baptized at age, upon their perſonal profeſſion of Faith and Repentance, ought not to be made the pattern of Baptiſm, as adminiſtred to or among the Gentiles; neither can any ſuch alteration in the Subjects, receptive of the Sign and Token of the Covenant, be concluded from theſe Inſtances as is pretended; the reaſon of their Baptiſm, upon their perſonal profeſſion, was, not becauſe under the new Teſtament adminiſtration ſuch a profeſſion is conſtantly and univerſally to antecede the application of Baptiſm. But the Reaſon was evidently twofold. First,

First, Becauſe now a new Sign and Token of the Covenant was inſtituted and appointed by Chriſt, which *Abraham*'s Seed, in their Generations, were under an Obligation, by vertue of that firſt Command, to keep; and hence, as during the continuance of the firſt Token, *viz.* Circumciſion, they were, as, to be incorporated into the Church, or viſible Body of Chriſt, under an Obligation to receive and bear that; ſo upon the inſtitution of a new Token, *viz.* Baptiſm, they were ſtill, ſuppoſing the continuance of their Memberſhip in the Church, obliged to receive and bear that; and hence, though they were duly admitted into the myſtical Body of Chriſt, by Circumciſion applyed to them in their infancy, and had no need of another admiſſion, yet when another Sign or Token was appointed, though by the ceſſation of Circumciſion, their Memberſhip in the Church was not nulled or broken off, yet it was neceſſary they ſhould receive and bear that other Sign or Token now inſtituted by Chriſt, and that, that they might continue their obedience to that firſt Command, to keep the Covenant.

Secondly, Becauſe the continuance of their Memberſhip did indiſpenſably require as a reformation in their judgments and practiſes, which was to be begun in Repentance, ſo they were to believe a new Article of Faith, *viz.* *That that individual Perſon, the Man Chriſt Jeſus, was the Son of God, the promiſed Meſſiah and Saviour of the World*; which Repentance

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and Faith were visibly to be professed, in order to their visible continuance in the Church or mystical Body of Christ; hence it was, that antecedent to their Baptism, the new Token of the Covenant, they were to make that profession of their Faith and Repentance, from whence it appears, that their Baptism upon their personal profession of Faith and Repentance, neither concludes themselves antecedently not to be Members of the same Church, or mystical Body of Christ, that Baptism admits into, nor yet that a visible profession is indispensably necessary, antecedent to the application of Baptism.

Secondly, The other thing inferred from the forementioned Instances and Examples, and which follows upon this, is, That none ought to be baptized, but such as are capable of making such a Profession: but now it will not follow, that because some Instances are left upon record, of persons being baptized at age upon their personal Faith and Repentance, that therefore none may be baptized but upon such a profession; these Instances shew us what we may and ought to do, when a suitable case occurs, but declare not what we ought to do, when cases are no way parallel, hence though we have no express mention made of the Baptism of Infants, *in totidem verbis*, yet having sufficient discoveries of the mind of Christ as to that matter, the want of such express mention ought to be no let in our way, as to the application of Baptism unto them; therefore if we would come to the knowledge

knowledge of the will of Chriſt, relating to the practice under debate, take heed we do not ſtumble at this ſtone, do not take up with the bare Inſtances and Examples of perſons baptized in primitive times, as though the full explication, both negative and poſitive, of the Commiſſion of Chriſt, for the adminiſtration of *Baptiſm*, were to be deduced from them, but take in and improve the whole of what Chriſt hath left us in his Word, whether in the Old or in the New Teſtament, for the finding out of his mind and will relating unto this practice: And thus, I hope, Reader, thou wilt find in the inſuing Treatiſe, that he hath given us ſufficient diſcoveries of his mind and will.

Fourthly, That which hath given no little advantage to the opinion and practiſe here oppoſed is, the comparing the ſuppoſed littleneſs of good, and ſmalneſs of advantage accrewing to the Seed of *Believers*, by the utmoſt of what we contend for on their behalf, ſuppoſing that were granted to them, with the ſuppoſed greatneſs and variety of inconveniencies, and ill conſequences ariſing from the granting of it unto them.

Hence we may obſerve, how our Oppoſers, with all their might, endeavour to diminiſh the good, pleaded by us to redound to the Seed of *Believers*, by their intereſt in the Covenant and *Baptiſm*, ſuppoſing the one ſhould be granted as their priviledge, and the other applyed unto them; and on the other hand, aggravate and ſet forth the variety of evils, inconveniencies

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and diſadvantages, ſuppoſed by them to follow upon the granting unto them ſuch a Covenant-intereſt and application of *Baptiſm* upon the ground thereof.

But now all that I ſhall ſay to this is, as for the good benefit and advantage ariſing to the Infant-ſeed of believing Parents, from both their Covenant-ſtate and *Baptiſm*, as applyed unto them thereupon, 'tis exceeding great, as will, I hope, through Divine aſſiſtance, be made to appear, if Providence diſappoint not my preſent purpoſe: At preſent let this be conſidered, as for their Covenant-intereſt and ſtate, a double benefit ariſeth to them thereby.

Firſt, They are, as diſtributively taken, under a Promiſe of God being their God, in the ſence declared in the inſuing Diſcourſe.

Secondly, They are, as collectively taken, as Members of the viſible Church, under an indefinite Promiſe, ſuppoſing them grown to years of maturity, of being ſo taught of God, as ſavingly to know him.

How far the certainty of their future Salvation, ſuppoſing them to dye in their infancy, may be concluded from their intereſt in theſe Promiſes, I ſhall leave to the judgment of the judicious Reader: This, I doubt not, will be found true at the appearing of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, when theſe Secrets ſhall be made manifeſt, that vaſtly the Major part of the Seed of Believers, and that by vertue of theſe very

Promiſes

Promiſes made unto them, will be found the Heirs of that Inheritance prepared for the Saints in light; miſtake me not, I do not ſay, the major part of the Seed of each particular *Believer*, but the major part of the Seed of *Believers* generally taken, or as taken one with another: *But* however methinks it ſhould not be accounted a ſmall matter, to be brought in any ſenſe, though it be never ſo little nigher the Promiſes of Salvation, and into a nigher capacity and probability of injoying the good promiſed than the reſt of mankind are in, and that they muſt ſure be acknowledged to be; by that their Covenant-ſtate and intereſt in the Promiſes: And as for *Baptiſm*, the good and benefit of that is hinted in the cloſe of the inſuing Diſcourſe, and is more fully to be declared, if the Lord will: As for the evils and miſchiefs, ſuppoſed to follow upon our Doctrine and practice, they are really none at all; whatever evils may be obſerved at any time to follow, they are only accidental, and will be found to have ſome other Original, and not be the natural and neceſſary fruits and conſequences of either the Doctrine or practice of *Infant-Baptiſm*.

Fifthly, That which is of a like importance with what hath been hitherto mentioned is, peoples placing, at leaſt, too much of their Religion in an external way, mode or form, attended with an eaſineſs and facility to be drawn into this or that way by unſound and groundleſs motives and inducements; too many think, that if they are but of ſuch a way they

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are good Chriſtians, and ſecured as to their eternal ſtates; hence through the ſubtlety of Satan, and deceit of their own hearts, they overlook and neglect the main things wherein the power of Religion doth indeed conſiſt, and betake themſelves to, and fall in with this or that way, as ſuppoſing themſelves thereby inſured for Salvation, and wanting judgment to diſcern between Truth and Error, fall in with the Judgment and practice under conſideration, as led thereunto meerly by ſome unſound and groundleſs motive and inducement; and though it is true, truly conſcientious Chriſtians cannot ſatisfie themſelves in a bare way or form, neither will they be led by any motives or inducements, without any regard at all had to the Word of God; yet even in reſpect of many of them, eſpecially ſuch who are of weaker Judgments, ſome unſound and groundleſs motive and inducement hath no little intereſt in their imbracing this or that way rather than any other; and thus the motives and inducements leading Profeſſors into a complyance with the way, or judgment and practice, lying oppoſite to what we have here pleaded for, are exceeding various, all which to enumerate would render me over tedious; all that I ſhall ſay therefore is, If we would come to a right underſtanding of the mind and will of our Lord Chriſt, place Religion where it ought to be placed, and then ſetting all ſuch motives and inducements aſide, weigh impartially the Scriptures, and Arguments grounded thereupon, readily giving up

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our judgments and practices to the guidance of the light and evidence of those Scriptures and Arguments.

Sixthly and lastly, The perswasion and practice here opposed, have prevailed so far among Christians, in a great measure, through their preposterous enquiries after the will of Christ, relating to the practice here pleaded for, taken in conjunction with the products of those inquiries in and upon their own minds; and the preposterousness of their inquiries lyes more especially in these two things.

First, In their inquiring after the will of Christ as to the *Baptism* of *Infants*, before they have sought after, or found out the proper uses and ends of *Baptism* in the general, and the true notion under which it was instituted and commanded by Christ.

Secondly, In their inquiring after the will of Christ relating to this practice, without any precedent consideration had to his will, relating to the interest of the Infants of believing Parents in the Covenant and Promises thereof: by these preposterous inquiries men put themselves under a threefold disadvantage, as to their finding out that will of Christ they are inquiring after.

First, They terminate and limit their inquiries to the Scriptures of the new Testament, as supposing the whole will of Christ, relating unto *Baptism*, it being a new Testament Ordinance, must needs be contained in them.

Secondly,

Secondly, Which follows hereupon, They ſearch not after, nor attend unto the Tenour of the Covenant, as at firſt eſtabliſhed with *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, nor attend to the various Scriptures contained in the old Teſtament, opening and confirming that Tenour of the Covenant, as ſo eſtabliſhed with him.

Thirdly, Which follows from both, They looſe the benefit of thoſe ſeveral Inferences that may rationally, and according to Scripture warrant, be drawn from intereſt in the Covenant, for the determining and concluding what is the mind and will of Chriſt concerning the application of Baptiſm.

But now would people begin their inquiries where they ought to do, and proceed regularly therein, they would find the mind and will of Chriſt to appear with much more clearneſs of evidence on the ſide of the practice we plead for; would they make their firſt inquiries after the proper uſes and ends of Baptiſm, and the true notion under which it is inſtituted, and then proceed in an impartial ſearch after the Tenour of the Covenant, and here again begin where they ought to do, *viz.* at the firſt eſtabliſhment of it with *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, and ſo proceed regularly, as the Covenant hath been continued, from one Generation to another, to *Abraham*'s Seed, whether Natural or Myſtical, ſtill regulating their judgments about the additions, alterations and variations of the Covenant, together with the

Sign and Token thereof, by what the Scriptures declare of Gods proceeding therein from time to time, they would come to a more clear understanding what the will of Christ, relating to the practice under consideration is.

But when people shall look upon *Baptism* as abstracted from its uses and ends, and the notion under which it is commanded, and then limit and terminate their inquiries after the Subjects it is to be applyed unto, to the Scriptures of the new Testament, overlooking the whole of what God hath declared of his mind and will, touching a right to, and interest in the Covenant, throughout the old Testament, having no regard to the ground, that interest in, and right to the Covenant gives to the Sign and Token of it, 'tis no wonder though they fall under so great mistakes, especially if we consider, in the second place, the usual issue and products of these inquiries, as thus prepostérously managed in and upon the minds of men; and that is a strong conceit, that because they find not in so many expres's words mention made of the *Baptism* of Infants in the new Testament, therefore undoubtedly it is not according to the mind and will of Christ, that they should be baptized; and people having their minds strongly possessed with this conceit, are easily perswaded, that they have no interest in, or right to the Covenant or Promises thereof; whereas would they but, before their minds are possessed with such a prejudicate conceit, search after the interest of the Seed of *Belivers*

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in the Covenant throughout the whole Scriptures, I doubt not, but as they would plainly diſcern that their intereſt, ſo they would more eaſily be perſwaded of their right to *Baptiſm*, the preſent Token of the Covenant; therefore if ever we would come to a clear underſtanding of the mind and will of Chriſt, relating to the *Baptiſm* of Infants, let our inquiries after it be regular.

Theſe things *I* could willingly have ſpoken more fully to, but the Book ſwelling to a bigger bulk than I had hoped it would have done, and having ſtaid ſomething long in the Preſs, theſe brief hints ſhall ſuffice. And therefore,

Thirdly, That the Reader eſpecially that is leſs able to paſs a Judgment upon an Argument, may reap the full benefit deſigned him by the inſuing Treatiſe, I ſhall here give him a brief Summary of what is more largely diſcourſed herein.

What I have adventured thus publickly to appear in the defence of, as the Reader will ſee in the main Propoſition, laid as a foundation to the inſuing Diſcourſe, is, the Affirmative of that ſo long and ſo much agitated Queſtion, concerning the *Baptiſm* of Infants: and all that I have at preſent ingaged in the defence of is, the Affirmative of that Queſtion, as it reſpects the Infant ſeed of Believers, whether both the Parents, or only one be ſo, and that as immediately proceeding from their own loins.

The method I have proceeded in, the Reader will find in the second page; the necessity of proceeding in that method I have already intimated, which I desire the Reader to take notice of, that when he finds himself led into a large discourse for the confirmation of the two former subordinate Propositions there laid down, he may not suppose himself led out of his way, as to the proof of the main Proposition; those that will find out the mind and will of our Lord Christ, concerning the Baptism of Infants, must first know his will concerning their interest in the Covenant and the Promises thereof. And those that will know the will of Christ concerning the Infant seed of Believers interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof, must begin at the first establishment of it with *Abraham*, the common Father of all Believers.

And that I might proceed with more clearness, and with greater advantage to the Reader, I have indeavoured fully to explain, at least so far as my present design did require, that grand Promise of the Covenant, unto which the three subordinate Propositions do refer; where the Reader will find, that though God in that term *Sted*, did intend *Abraham*'s whole Seed, or all those he should sustain the relation of a Father unto; yet according to the letter of that Promise, he had a direct and immediate respect to his natural Seed, yet after a different manner, according to a twofold consideration they fall under.

First,

First, As his natural Children, as immediately proceeding from his own loins.

Secondly, As his natural Race and Posterity, mediately descending from him in after Ages.

Hence the Promise is to be considered of, either as a definite Promise made to his Seed, distributively taken, and so it did reach to all his Children, immediately proceeding from his own loins, and as it did respect his natural Seed, only to them, or as an indefinite Promise made to his Seed, collectively taken, and so it did extend to his whole natural Race and Posterity; my meaning more plainly is this, That this Promise was either so made to *Abraham*'s natural Seed, as that each of them, as severally and particularly taken, had, as his Seed, an actual interest in it: Thus it was only made to his Children, as immediately proceeding from his own loins, or was so made to his Seed, as though none in particular had meerly, as his natural Seed, an actual interest in it: yet God did thereby signifie and declare his will and purpose, to vouchsafe unto them, more generally considered, and that as the Seed of *Abraham*, that privilege of a Covenant-relation with himself; in definite Promises God speaks to particular persons, in indefinite Promises he speaks to none in particular, only declares his will and purpose concerning such a sort or species of men, to whom he makes good his Promises, according to the good pleasure of his own will, in a complyance with his eternal purposes and decrees.

Now in my first subordinate *Proposition*, where *I* say, that God intended *Abraham's* natural Seed, as the immediate and next Subjects of that *Promise*, I mean his Children, as immediately proceeding from his own loins, and take the *Promise* as a definite *Promise*: This I have proved at large *Chap.* 2. and answered what Objections I could imagine might be made against it *Chap.* 3. whether *I* must refer the Reader for full satisfaction.

And this first *Proposition* being clear, the way lyes plain to the Second, it being a very rational Supposal, that what *Priviledge* or Blessing the Father injoyed, should (supposing it alike competable to them as to him) descend to his Seed, as his Heirs; and that believing Gentiles *Abraham's* mystical Seed, have this *Promise* of the Covenant given to, and settled upon them, and that in the same latitude and extent in which it was given to *Abraham* himself, as a natural Father of natural Children, only allowing to him, as Father, that preheminence mentioned *page* 65. is evident.

First, From the very Tenour of the *Promise*, as at first made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed; it was made to his Seed in their Generations, that is, to them and to their Seed, or their Children, as immediately descending from them, for so the Covenant was established, not only with *Abraham* himself, but with him and his Seed, in their Generations; and in the same extent and latitude the *Promises* of the Covenant must be interpreted and understood, as the

Covenant

Covenant was eſtabliſhed with *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, ſo the Promiſes of the Covenant were to him, and to his Seed in their Generations; and anſwerably I have ſo expreſt my ſelf throughout the enſuing Diſcourſe.

And here let two things be carefully obſerved.

Firſt, That the Promiſe is made to *Abraham*'s whole Seed, both natural and myſtical, in one and the ſame tenour.

Hence ſecondly, Look how the Promiſe was to be underſtood, as referring to either kinds or ſpecies of his Seed, ſo it is to be underſtood, as referring to the other; as it was to be underſtood, as referring to his natural Seed, ſo it it is to be underſtood, as referring to his myſtical Seed.

Now that it was, as referring to *Abraham*'s natural Seed, to be underſtood as including Parents and Children, is evident, partly becauſe the Promiſe, as thus made, as referring to them, will admit of no other ſence or meaning, conſiſtent with the truth and faithfulneſs of God in his Promiſes, partly becauſe God by his after dealing with the Jews, declares that to be the ſence and meaning of it, and partly becauſe the Prophets ſo expound it as to be fulfilled in Goſpel times.

Now this Promiſe being ſo to be underſtood, as referring to *Abraham's* natural Seed, it muſt needs be ſo underſtood, as referring to his myſtical Seed.

Secondly, This ſecond Propoſition is further evident from the Promiſes and Prophecies of the old Teſtament, relating to new Teſtament times.

Thirdly, From the expreſs letter of new Teſtament, which affirms poſitively, that the Bleſſing, not this or that part of the Bleſſing, but the Bleſſing ſimply and abſolutely is come upon believing Gentiles by Chriſt.

Fourthly, From ſeveral paſſages in the new Teſtament, which though they do not in expreſs terms hold forth this ſettlement of this Promiſe upon believing Gentiles, yet do plainly imply it.

For ſatisfaction in all which things, I am neceſſitated to refer the Reader to the Diſcourſe it ſelf, where he will find them largely ſpoken to.

Theſe two former Propoſitions being eſtabliſhed, the third, as I judge, will be queſtioned but by few; and it is evident thus, for as *Abraham's* whole Seed are in their Generations, that is, both Parents, and immediate Children, under the Promiſe, ſo they are under the Obligation

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of the Command, to keep the Covenant, that is, the Sign or Token of the Covenant; whence its evident, that as the Covenant that *Abraham's* Seed, in their Generations, then were, or after ſhould be received into, had, and was to have a Sign or Token annexed to the adminiſtration of it; ſo that it alwayes was, and is the duty of Parents in Covenant, as to receive and bear that Sign or Token themſelves, ſo to take care that their Infant-ſeed, as joynt Heirs with themſelves of the ſame *Promiſes*, ſhould receive and bear it; and conſequently that believing Gentiles, they being the myſtical Seed of *Abraham*, are ſtill under the Obligation of this Command, and ought to be baptized themſelves (*Baptiſm* being the preſent Sign and Token of the Covenant, into which they are received) ſo to ſee that their Infant-ſeed be alſo baptized; and as the *Promiſe* and Command are of an equal extent, ſo intereſt in this *Promiſe* declares the perſon ſo intereſted to have ſuch a relation to the myſtical *Body* of Chriſt, as is an undoubted ground of implantation and incorporation into that *Body*, as viſible, by *Baptiſm*; the *Promiſe* is made unto Chriſt, and only to him, either perſonally or myſtically conſidered; hence whoever have an intereſt in this *Promiſe*, they muſt undoubtedly have ſo far relation to Chriſt, as will warrant their implantation into him, as myſtically conſidered, by *Baptiſm*, that being the only means appointed by Chriſt, for the implantation of

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any into his myſtical *Body*: And further, we find the Apoſtle grounds his Exhortation to *Baptiſm*, upon intereſt, either in this or ſome other equivalent *Promiſe*, which he would never have done, had not intereſt in that *Promiſe* been a ſufficient ground for the application or reception of *Baptiſm*, but I muſt come to a cloſe.

And thus Reader, though there are ſome other things I would willingly have ſpoken to, yet I ſhall only acquaint thee with two things, and requeſt two or three things of thee, and then diſmiſs thee, to the ſerious peruſal of what is here tendered to thee.

Firſt, That which I would acquaint thee with is, That whereas there are ſeveral Scriptures, uſually inſiſted upon, for the proof of the lawfulneſs of this practice of Infant-baptiſm, which thou wilt find in the inſuing Treatiſe, either not at all, or very little touched upon, the reaſon is, not that I judged them impertinent or inſufficient for the proof of that practice; I judge they are full and pertinent, and ſome of them, eſpecially that 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. as managed in ſpecial by Mr. *Baxter*, unanſwerable, but know, that I do but glean after others, and therefore have eſpecially inſiſted, both in the Arguments I have managed, and Objections I have anſwered, upon ſuch Scriptures as have been more briefly touched upon

upon by them; and would desire the Reader, as he hath opportunity, to take what they have said from those Scripture, for his more full confirmation (supposing any doubts may yet remain in his mind) in the Truth that I, in common with them, have pleaded for.

Secondly, Another thing (Reader) that I would acquaint thee with is this, That whereas 'tis possible thou mayest have met with some Objections which are not here taken notice of; the reason is, because I judged them no way able to counter-ballance (in the judgments of any of a competent understanding) the evidence produced, in confirmation of what I have asserted, or else because they wholly concern others and not my self, in the way I have proceeded in,

That which I would request of thee is;

First, That thou take the three subordinate Propositions in that order I have laid them down, and fully weigh the first before thou proceed to the second, and then throughly weigh the second before thou proceed to the third, to be satisfied in the truth of the first will conduce not a little to thy entertaining the evidence produced for the confirmation of the second; and to be well established in these two, will much facillitate thy imbracement of the last,

laſt, wherein the main Truth contended for is contained.

Secondly, Let me requeſt a favourable conſtruction of what weakneſs appears in the management of the whole Debate; thou wilt ſoon find, that the Diſcourſe here put into thy hand comes abroad in a very mean dreſs, and not without many incongruities in expreſſion, and too many interruptions in the ſence; I am unwilling to trouble thee with an account how it is come thus to paſs, let me only ſay, it comes to thee, not only through the hands of a Printer and Corrector, but of more than one Tranſcribers: I have only to requeſt on my own behalf, that thou wilt have ſo much Charity for me, as to judge, it went out of my hands compleat, as to ſence, though not cloathed with ſuch apt and fit expreſſions as it might have been; on their behalf I ſhall requeſt, that thou wilt not lay the blame upon any one of them, they have all their reſpective ſhares in it: I hope thou wilt be ſo ingenious, yea, ſo wiſe for thy ſelf, as to look at the ſtrength of the Argument, and not at the defects of the terms.

Thirdly, I have only this further to requeſt of thee, That thou wilt joyn with me in fervent prayers unto God, like unto whom none can teach, that he will lead both thy ſelf and me

me into all truth, and through the true knowledge and practice thereof, unto that Assembly of the First-born, among whom no contest, of what kind soever, have any place.

Jan. 20. 1670.

Thine, in the Service of the Gospel,

Joseph Whiston.

Reader,

Reader, leaſt thou ſhouldeſt either not underſtand, or miſunderſtand the Authors ſence in theſe paſſages, wherein theſe Eſcapes have ſlipt the *Preſs* (which are ſomewhat more than is uſual in ſo ſmall a Treatiſe as this is) thou art deſired before thou readeſt to correct them with thy *Pen*.

In the Preface, page 7. line 11. read incurring.

PAge 13. line 1. blot out, in after ages; p. 18. l. 24 for that r. theſe are: p. 29. l. 23. put a full ſtop after family; p. 42. l. 19. r. indefinite: p. 44. l. 20. before the add all: p. 47. l. 2. f never r. now: p. 49. l. 12 r. from: p. 52. l. 20. f party r. parts: p. 55 l. 20. f. the r. no: p. 57. l. 29. blot out verſe 12 p 68 l 18. r. inconſiſtent: p. 76. l. 32. f. as r. is: p. 79. l. 24. f. wer. he: p. 84. l. 7. blot out that; l. 14. r. general: p. 87. l. 1. f. Ir it; p. 93. l 10. r. his: p. 94 [illegible]: 108. l. 10 f. father r. faith: l. 20. r. that; p 112. l. 1. blot out himſelf; p. 113. l. 14. r ther houſes: p. 123. l. 28, blot out one: p. 135. l 24. r. concerns; p. 142. blot out part of the ſecond and third line; p. 147. l 12. blot out to ſay that; p. 149. l 19. blot out all; p. 153. l. 25. r carefully; p. 179. l. 12 r. political: p. 184. l. 9 f. was r. as: p 197 l. 31. f. but r. that; p. 203. l. ult. r. their: p. 212. l. 17. r not: p. 216, l. 28. r. offert: p. 242. l. 17 r. when, ſo p 245. l. 24 p. 246 l. 11. f. generally r. Gentiles; p. 249. l. 9 f. or r and; p. 258, l. 28. r. contradiſtinction. p. 272. before only add not; p. 273. f. there r. theſe; p. 306 l 26. r. deduced.

There are, its true, ſome other miſtakes of a leſs moment, which the Reader will eaſily perceive and rectifie as he goes along, or if he diſcern them not he is in no danger to be prejudiced by them; as ſometimes the plural number put for the ſingular, ſometimes the ſingular for the plural. The Reader is muſt alſo take notice of a miſtake in the Folio's, the Folio's from 156. to 177. being wanting, where yet nothing is wanting in the Book of what was intended.

Infant-

Infant-Baptism from Heaven, and not of Men.

CHAP. I.

The main Proposition, discussed in the ensuing Treatise, laid down; in order to the confirmation of which, three subordinate Propositions proposed. The grand Promise of the Covenant, wherein God promised to be a God to Abraham *and his Seed in their Generations largely explained. The full mind and meaning of God in that Promise held forth in five Conclusions. The sence in which the first subordinate Proposition is to be understood, declared.*

Proposition.

THat it is the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the Infant-seed of one or both believing Parents should be baptized.

For the more full evidencing the truth asserted in this grand Proposition, I shall lay down

and ſpeak to three ſubordinate Propoſitions, which being diſtinctly and fully proved, the truth of our grand Propoſition, will as certainly and infallibly be inferred and concluded from them, as the ſalvation of any particular Perſon can be inferred and concluded from that univerſal Propoſition (*viz.*) *He that believes ſhall be ſaved.*

These ſubordinate Propoſitions are,

First, *That when God, at his firſt entring Covenant with* Abraham, *promiſed to be a God to him and to his Seed, he intended his natural Seed, as the firſt and next Subjects of that Promiſe.*

Secondly, *That this Promiſe in the ſence after to be declar'd, is by God himſelf ſettled upon and confirmed to believing Gentiles.*

Thirdly, *That all thoſe that are under, or are the actual Subjects of that Promiſe, ought, according to the will of Chriſt, to be baptized.*

To begin with the firſt; *Viz.*

That when God at his firſt entering Covenant with *Abraham*, promiſed to be a God to him and to his Seed, he intended his natural Seed as the firſt and next Subjects of that promiſe. *Abraham's* natural Seed were intended as the immediate Subjects of that Promiſe, as made to him with reference to his Seed: The Promiſe had reference

reference unto, is that in *Gen.* 17. 7. where note, that I do not say that they are the only, nor yet the principal subjects of that promise, but the immediate and first subjects, the promise in the letter of it did immediately and primarily respect them.

Now that the sence and meaning of this Proposition may more fully appear, and all mistakes about it be obviated and prevented, I shall enquire into three things with reference to that Promise.

First, Who are intended in that term Seed, according to the true and full acceptation of it in that promise.

Secondly, Under what notion, or in what capacity *Abraham* is to be considered as receiving that promise, or having that promise made to him by God.

Thirdly, What is the true intent of that promise, in regard of the extent and latitude on the one hand, and the limitations on the other.

For the first, We may observe that the Scripture speaks of a twofold seed of *Abraham*.

1. There is his natural Seed.

2. There is his spiritual or mystical Seed.

I shall speak to this term Seed, in the latter notion of it, in the first place, namely, as it intends or signifieth *Abraham*'s spiritual or mystical seed, and thus by seed we are to understand Christ mystical, or whole Christ, as I may so speak, including both

Christ himself as Head, and the whole universal Church, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, as the Body: Thus this term Seed is taken, *Gal.* 3. 16. *When God made promise to Abraham, he saith not, to thy seeds, as of many, but to thy seed, which is Christ*; id est, Christ mystical; and thus the Gentile Proselites under the first Testament, Servants bought with money, or born in the house, were accounted for *Abraham*'s seed; all those that were admitted into fellowship with the people of God in the Covenant, and benefits, blessings and priviledges of it, how or by what means soever they came to have their admission, were accounted for *Abraham*'s seed, and had the actual enjoyment of the good of that Covenant (I mean so many as did actually enjoy it) as *Abraham*'s seed, by vertue of this Promise, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed*: So believing Gentiles, or any other, who with them have admission into the Covenant, are accounted for *Abraham*'s seed: all that inherit the good promised, inheriting of it, under that notion, as his seed, by vertue of that forementioned Promise; and thus the natural seed of *Abraham* in another sense were his mystical seed; the whole mystical body of Christ made up, as I have said, both of Jews and Gentiles, is the seed here intended: And thus spiritual or mystical seed of *Abraham* falls under a two-fold consideration.

1. As visible and denominative.
2. As invisible and real.

The

The Apostle gives us this distribution of *Abraham's* seed, *Rom.* 9. 6. *All are not Israel that are of Israel, &c.* that is, all that are of the mystical body of Christ as visible, are not really and truly of his body mystical as invisible; the visible body of Christ is of a larger extent than his invisible; 'tis all one as if the Apostle had said, some are visible, and denominatively the seed of *Abraham*, who yet are not truly and internally his seed: That this is the meaning of the Apostle, is evident from the following verses; of which place more hereafter. Hence this term *seed* is to be understood sometimes of his seed as visible and denominative, sometime of his seed as invisible and real: in the former sence we are to understand it in the place forementioned, *Galat.* 3 16. By Christ we are to understand the mystical body of Christ as visible, as is evident, because 'tis by Baptism that the several members are incorporated into, and united unto the body of Christ, as here spoken of.

Now Baptism doth not properly incorporate into the body of Christ as invisible, but as visible; in the latter sence we are to understand it, *Rom.* 9. 8. Seed here we are to understand of the elect, and the meaning is, that all they that are the children of the flesh are not elected, and in that respect not the Children of God, nor accounted for the seed.

Some that are the children of the flesh are the children of God, and are accounted for the seed, but all that are the children of the flesh are not the children of God, nor accounted for the seed;

that is in this ſtrict notion and conſideration of this term ſeed, as it ſignifieth the true internal and invisible ſeed of *Abraham*.

Children of God and Seed here are, *termini convertibiles*, convertible terms: now as perſons are denominated the children of God, either in regard of their viſible and external appearing ſo to be, or in regard of their really and internally being ſuch; (ſaith Chriſt, *'Tis not meet to take the childrens bread and give it to dogs*) it's meant of the things of the Goſpel, primarily appertaining to the Jews, as yet the Covenant-people of God: Now Chriſt calls them, indefinitely conſidered, children, that is children of God; when as it appears by their ſo general after-rejection, but few of them were really and internally the children of God.

So ſome are the ſeed of *Abraham*, and ſo to be accounted, in regard of their viſible and outward appearing ſo to be, who yet are not really and internally his ſeed.

Others are not only viſibly, and in regard of an external appearance the ſeed of *Abraham*, but are internally and really ſo: Of theſe latter, this term Seed, in this place, is to be underſtood; the children of the promiſe are accounted for the Seed, that is, they, and they only are internally the Seed of *Abraham*, I mean his ſpiritual and myſtical ſeed, for in that ſenſe this term ſeed is here to be taken.

Secondly, There is *Abraham's* natural Seed; only for preventing miſtakes, Note

That through I diſtinguiſh between *Abraham's* ſpiritual

spiritual and natural Seed, yet this difference between them is only accidental, the same persons might be, and in respect of many were both his natural, and also his spiritual Seed, of which more after. This being noted, 2. That *Abraham's* natural Seed, and this phrase, *Abrahams natural Seed*, may be taken two ways.

1. As signifying his Children descending immediately from his own loins; as it is said of *Ishmael* he was *Abrahams* Seed, *Gen.* 21. 13. *He is thy Seed*, saith God to *Abraham*, speaking of *Ishmael*; and the like may be said of all his other children, they were his natural Seed.

2. This phrase may be taken as signifying his whole race or posterity, or all those that did mediately descend from him in after ages: thus *Gen.* 15. 18. *Unto thy Seed*, saith God, *have I given this land*; it is meant of his race or posterity, or his Seed mediately descending from him.

Secondly, Under what notion, or in what capacity *Abraham* is to be considered, as receiving this promise from God.

Answer, That *Abraham* is to be considered both as a natural and also as a spiritual Father, or both as a natural Father, and as the Father of the faithful. That God had look on *Abraham* as giving him this promise as the father of the faithful, is evident from *Rom.* 4. 11, 12, 13. and some have thought that he was eyed and looked upon only under that notion and in that capacity, but

but he was not only looked upon as the father of the faithful, but as a natural father, is evident by this argument.

If *Abraham's* natural seed were intended as the immediate and next subjects of this promise, and that as such, then *Abraham* as receiving this promise, or having this promise made to him with reference unto them, must needs be eyed and looked upon as a natural father; but the former is true, therefore the latter; the consequence in the major proposition, cannot be denied; for if God intended *Abraham's* natural seed as such, that is, as his natural seed, then he must needs eye *Abraham* as a natural father; as making this promise to him: Now that he did intend *Abraham's* natural seed, will, I doubt not, be sufficiently evident by the proof of this first proposition; and that they were intended as his natural seed is evident, because in respect of some of them, they could be looked upon under no other notion, they could not be looked upon as his spiritual seed, for such they were not, whether we respect election or actual faith, take it of *Ishmael*, he was neither elected, nor had actual faith; as for what some think concerning his future repentance, 'tis wholly groundless, we having no intimation of it throughout the whole Scripture, but the contrary is intimated, or rather plainly implied in that *Rom.* 9. Now if he (and 'tis like the same was the case of some at least of *Abraham's* Sons by *Keturah*) could not be looked upon as *Abraham's* spiritual seed, he must needs be looked upon

on

on, under that very notion and consideration, as his natural seed, and as such was intended as one subject of that promise: And whereas some think that the Apostle, *Rom.* 4. expounds this promise as made to *Abraham* only as the father of the faithful, 'tis a great mistake.

That he was eyed as the father of the faithful is readily granted; but that he was eyed *only* as such a father is denied, and is not in the least intimated by the Apostle in that place: But not to stay on this, it is sufficiently evident, that as *Abraham* sustained that two-fold relation, *viz.* of a natural and of a spiritual father, so he was eyed under both notions, as receiving this promise, on the behalf or with reference to his seed.

Thirdly, What is the true intent of this promise, in regard of the extent and latitude on the one hand, and the limitation on the other.

Before I answer this Question, let me only premise, that the true determination of this Question conduceth not a little (if I mistake not) to the clearing up and determining the truth pleaded for, as the not right understanding the true intent of this promise in the regards mentioned, hath been one considerable cause of so many rejecting the truth we plead for, and their too ready imbracing of the opinion we oppose: Therefore I desire, that what I have to say in answer to the Question, may be diligently attended to.

First

First then, for the intent of this promise, in regard of the extent and latitude of it, take it in these two particulars.

That under this term Seed in this promise, the whole seed of *Abraham*, whether natural or mystical, are comprehended; hence though I say his natural seed, as afore expressed, were firstly and immediately intended as the first and next subjects of this promise; yet not excluding any other, who according to Scripture account were to be reckoned unto *Abraham* as his seed: As we are not to interpret this term Seed of Christ personally, so as to exclude his mystical body; nor of his mystical body, invisibly and internally considered, so as to exclude any that are of his mystical body, as externally and visibly considered; nor of his mystical body, whether visible or invisible, to the excluding of his natural seed, whether immediate or mediate: So on the other hand, we must not limit it to his immediate seed, to the excluding of his mediate, nor to either, so as to exclude his mystical seed, but we are to understand it in its full latitude and extent, as comprehending and including his whole seed.

That *Abraham*'s natural seed, as immediately proceeding from his own loins, were intended, will appear by the proof of this first proposition, and is the only thing there to be proved; that his whole race and posterity as mediately descending from him, were intended shall be granted.

In regard of the continuance of

That

That *Abraham's* spiritual or mystical seed were intended is sufficiently evident, as from the denomination they bear of *Abraham's* seed; so by their inheriting all the good of the Covenant of Grace, as *Abraham's* seed, by vertue of this very promise, as will more fully appear by the proof of the second proposition; so that, I say, this term Seed is to be understood in such an extent and latitude, as to take in and comprehend *Abraham's* whole seed; but *this* I say, that his natural seed were firstly and immediately intended, as the first and next subjects of that promise.

2. Which I desire with the like care may be attended to: This promise, as made to *Abraham's* whole seed, was made to them in their respective generations, under which phrase, their generations, we must understand Parents, and their Children immediately descending from their own loins: so that the promise runs to *Abraham's* seed in their generations, that is, to all his seed, and to their respective natural seed in conjunction with themselves.

Secondly, We may consider the intent of this promise, in regard of the limitations of it; and thus this promise had a two fold limitation.

1. It had a limitation in regard of the persons actually interested in it.

2. In regard of the continuance of that their interest in, and their actual possession and injoyment

ment of the good of the promise they were before interested in.

Then I say, this promise was given to *Abraham* under a limitation, in regard of the persons actually interested in it, and thus it was limited to *Abraham*'s seed in their respective generations, including, as before, parents and their immediate children; my meaning is, that this promise taken as a definite promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his seed distributively taken, that is, as they were severally and each in particular intended in it, so it did reach to and take in only *Abraham*'s seed in their respective generations, they and their immediate children.

It's true, as it was an indefinite promise made to *Abraham*'s natural seed, collectively or generally taken, so it had respect unto his whole race and posterity, whether mediately or immediately descending from him; but I say, take it as a definite promise made to *Abraham*'s seed, distributively or particularly taken: so it was made only to each of them respectively in their generations, that is, to them and their immediate children. To explain my meaning, take for instance any parent that was related to *Abraham* as one of his seed; let *Isaac* be the instance: *Isaac* was one of *Abraham*'s seed, and as so related to *Abraham* was under this promise, That God would be a God to him in his generations: Now as in this phrase, his generations, *Isaac*, and his children immediately descending

ſcending from him in after ages, were perſonally included, or particularly intended in it, it was to *Iſaac*, as *Abraham*'s ſeed, in his generations, to him and to his immediate children. As this promiſe is to be underſtood in the extent mentioned, as including parents and children; ſo it is not to be inlarged beyond what was the true intendment of God in it. Now though God made it to each of *Abraham*'s ſeed, whether immediately deſcending from his own loins, or otherwiſe ſtanding related to him, as his ſeed in their generations, yet his intendment was not, that all that ſhould ſucceſſively, in following ages, deſcend from them reſpectively, ſhould be included as joynt ſubjects with them of this promiſe, ſo as to claim, by vertue of their relation unto them, a joynt right and title to the promiſe with them; his intendment only was, that his ſeed in their generations, that is, parents, and immediate children, ſhould be accounted as joynt ſubjects of this promiſe; and in this regard this promiſe was one and the ſame, or ran in one and the ſame tenour to *Abraham*, and to his ſeed, only allowing to *Abraham* ſomething of preheminence (hereafter to be explained) above any of his ſeed; but otherwiſe the promiſe, for the ſubſtance of it, was one and the ſame, or ran in one and the ſame tenour to both; for the promiſe was to *Abraham* and his ſeed; which promiſe, as a definite promiſe made to him, with reference to his natural ſeed, either barely taken, or extended no further than to his natural ſeed, immediately deſcending from his

own

own loins, and was not to his whole race and posterity, no not by *Isaac* and *Jacob*, as many seem to have very much mistaken, to the no little obstructing the truth we now plead for: I still grant that the promise, as an indefinite promise, had respect to his whole race and posterity, and that not only by *Isaac* and *Jacob*, but *Ishmael* and his Sons by *Keturah*: but yet as a definite promise, as before explain'd, it extended no further than to his own immediate children, even *Jacob* himself had not an actual interest in this promise in his infancy, as he was one of *Abraham*'s natural posterity, but as he was included in the promise as made to *Isaac* (one of *Abraham*'s seed) in his generations, and in the very same tenour the promise runs to *Abraham*'s seed, That as God was a God to *Abraham* and his natural seed, so he would be a God to them and their natural seed, that is, to them in their generations: But that's the first limitation of this promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his seed.

2. This promise was given unto *Abraham* under a limitation, in regard of the continuance of his seeds interest in, and their actual possession and injoyment of the good promised, that they had afore an interest in; and thus it was limited both to the seed and their respective generations, as they should become, and continue to be *Abraham*'s mystical or spiritual seed, though their personal entring into, and walking in the steps of the faith and obedience of their father *Abraham*.

Take

Take *Isaac*, he was one of *Abraham's* natural seed, and as such was intended in this promise, that God would be a God to him in his generations; that is as before expressed, to him, and to his immediate children, but also the continuance of his interest in, and actual enjoyments of the good of the promise, as grown up to years of maturity, did depend upon, and necessarily require his personal acceptation and performance of the conditions of the Covenant, into which he had, as one of *Abraham's* natural seed, admission in his infancy; hence his children's actual interest in, and right unto the promise, which was in part the good of the promise, as made to him, depended upon his mystical relation to *Abraham*, and not merely upon his natural relation to *Abraham*.

For if so be he had not accepted of, and performed the conditions of the Covenant, his children had wholly lost that their right to and interest in the promise, which was granted unto them with himself, as included in his generations.

And hence it will undeniably follow, that all *Abraham's* natural race and posterity by *Esau* and *Jacob*, had their interest in, and right to the promise, and enjoyed the good promised, either as *Abraham's* mystical seed, or as included in the expectations of those that were his mystical seed, for their bare natural relation to *Abraham* was not enough to preserve their own interest, much more a right to and interest in the promise to their children.

And

and from all it will follow, which I desire may be diligently observed, that the case of believing Gentiles, supposing the promise to run in the same extent and latitude to them, that it did run in to the natural posterity of *Abraham* (as I doubt not, through divine assistance, shall be made evident) that it doth

And the case of the Jews, or natural posterity of *Abraham*, is one and the same, in regard of their own and their childrens right to, and interest in the promise: the natural posterity of *Abraham* or the Jews, when grown up, held their interest in, and right to the promise, not barely as his natural posterity, but as accepting of, and performing the conditions of the Covenant, so far as not absolutely to disannul that their interest in it, and consequently as *Abrahams* mystical seed, and as such they conveyed a right to, and interest in the same Covenant and Promise, themselves were under to their children.

And the same is the case of believing Gentiles, they have a right to, and interest in the promise, as accepting of, and performing the conditions of the Covenant, and as so doing convey an interest in, and right to the same Covenant and Promise, they themselves are under, to their children, by vertue of this promise made unto *Abraham*, with reference to his seed in their generations.

The truth of which assertion, with the extent and limitations of this

I doubt not sufficiently appear when I come to the proof of the second proposition.

The sum of what hath been hitherto said, take in brief in these five Conclusions.

First, That when God entred Covenant with *Abraham*, and promised to be a God to him and his seed in their generations, he intended, according to the full latitude and extent of that promise, his whole seed, whether Jews or Gentiles, grown persons, or infants, all those who, according to the Scripture account, should bear the denomination of *Abraham's* seed, how, or by what means soever that denomination was applicable unto them, were comprehended under this term Seed.

Secondly, Although the promise extend to, and ought to be interpreted of *Abraham's* whole seed, as now expressed, yet God in it had a peculiar and special regard to his natural seed, whether immediately or mediately descending from him.

Thirdly, That the natural seed, race or posterity of *Abraham* injoyed an interest in, and right to that promise, and together therewith a Covenant-state and relation God-ward successively, for a long time; not barely as his natural seed, but as his mystical seed; that is, through parents so far performing the conditions of the Covenant, as to preserve their own Covenant state and relation themselves, conveying to their children the same interest in, and right to the Covenant and Promises thereof that themselves had.

Fourthly, That in and among the seed of *Abraham*, as considered these various wayes aforementioned, there is a certain number afore chosen and elected of God, to whom in a peculiar and special manner this term Seed is applicable, and that in regard of their eternal designment to enjoy the good promised, the whose number of those, whom visibly and denominatively were to be accounted for *Abraham's* Seed, were intended in this promise, yet the promise was not intended by God infallibly to convey the good promised to every individual person, whom in regard of an external and visible denomination, were to be accounted for his seed, but there is a certain number chosen of God from eternity, actually to inherit the good promised, who in time are savingly wrought upon, and these, in a special and peculiar manner, are in the esteem of God accounted for the seed.

Fifthly, That yet they were the natural seed of *Abraham*, as immediately descending from his own loins, who were intended in this promise, as the next and immediate subjects of it, and that the natural seed of *Abraham* intended in this first Proposition.

And that is the thing that I shall now apply my self to the proof of.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

The truth of the first Proposition, as before explained, evidenced two wayes.

1. *More generally, by such Arguments as will evince, that all* Abraham's *immediate natural seed, one as well as another, were intended in the immediate and next subjects of this Promise.*

2. *More particularly, by instancing in such of his natural seed, as upon a supposition, of whose being intended in the Promise, it will necessarily follow, that all his natural seed were in like manner intended, and proving that they were indeed intended by God in that Promise.*

THat when God at his first entring Covenant with *Abraham*, promised to be a God to him and his seed, intended his natural seed, as immediately descending from his own loins, as the immediate and next subjects of that promise, may be evinced two wayes:

1. More generally.
2. More particularly.

1. More generally. And thus I shall only offer a two-fold Argument.

The first shall be taken from the Promise it self, as taken according to the literal and most proper sence and signification of those words it is exprest in, and it is this:

What God speaks unto men ought to be interpreted and understood according to the literal and most proper sense and signification of those words he expresseth himself in, unless there be some necessary Reason enforcing a recession from that literal and most proper sence and signification of his words.

But according to the literal and most proper sence and signification of the words of this Promise, now made to *Abraham* his natural seed, immediately descending from his own loins, and that universally one as well as the other, must be intended, as the immediate and next subjects of it, and there is no Reason enforcing our recession from that literal and most proper sence and signification of his words: Therefore we ought to interpret and understand them, as intending his immediate natural seed, as the immediate and next subjects of that Promise. When God said to *Abraham*, He would be a God to him and to his seed in their generations, sure by the literal and most proper sence and signification of the words, wherein the Promise is exprest, must needs lead him to apply it as to himself, so to his immediate natural seed, and that universally.

It's true, God promised to *Abraham*, That he *would make him the Father of many Nations*; and doubtless *Abraham* did understand the Promise, as teaching and taking in all those he should sustain the relation of a Father unto.

But no Reason could be drawn from the words of the Promise it self, why either *Abraham*, or any other since, should understand it, as including his remote or adopted seed, to the excluding of his own natural seed, as immediately descending from him.

Now that what God speaks ought to be interpreted, as before exprest, cannot be doubted by any.

And therefore all that possibly can be objected, for the invalidating this argument, is, That there is a necessity of interpreting and understanding this Promise, as now made to *Abraham*, differently from what the literal and proper signification of the words seems to import: Whether there be any such necessity shall be considered by and by.

In the mean time let it be observed, that we have the letter of the Promise on our side, as to the interpretation put upon it.

The second Argument shall be taken from *Abraham's* applying of the seal or token of that Covenant, whereof the Promise, under consideration, was a principal part, to his immediate and natural seed, and that universally to one as well as to another, and that under that very notion and consideration, as the seal and token of the Covenant.

Hence I argue,

1. *Abraham*, according to the will and appointment of God, did apply the seal or token of that Covenant (wherein the Promise, under consideration, was one special Article on Gods part) to all his immediate natural seed, to one as well as to the other, and that under that very notion and consideration, as the seal or token of the Covenant, then God in that Promise must needs intend all his immediate natural seed, as the Subjects of it: but the former is true, therefore the latter.

The Assumption sure cannot once be questioned by any that have read over the Book of *Genesis*: yet *exabundanti*.

Let me touch upon the proof of it in the several branches or clauses of it; It contains three Branches.

2. That *Abraham* did apply the seal or token of that Covenant, wherein this Promise is contained, unto all his immediate natural seed: If that term Seal offend any, let them keep only to the other word token; it's all one as to my present purpose. That Circumcision was the seal or token of the Covenant, that God now entred into with *Abraham* and his seed, is past all doubt, it's expressly called *The Token of the Covenant*, Gen. 17. 11. *It shall even be a token of the Covenant betwixt me and you*. A token of this Covenant; Of what Covenant? Why, of that no doubt, now established with *Abraham*, and

his

his seed in their generations: and that *Abraham* did apply this token of the Covenant to all his natural seed, is evident, partly from Gods Command, read that *Gen.* 17. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. partly from *Abraham's* practice, mention is expresly made of his circumcising of *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, verse 23 with *Gen.* 21. 4.

But some will say, There's no mention of his circumcising his Sons by *Keturah*.

To that I answer, No more is there mention made of *Jacob's* circumcision, nor of his twelve Sons circumcision, and yet shall it be questioned, whether they were circumcised or no? The command of God engaging it, and the testimony that God gives of *Abraham's* faithfulness, and his circumcising all his male servants, is superabundant evidence that he did circumcise them, though their circumcision be not mentioned. So that it's undeniable, that Abraham did apply the seal or token of the Covenant to all his seed, immediately descending from his own loins.

2. That *Abraham* did apply this seal or token of the Covenant to his seed, under that very notion and consideration as the seal or token of it, this is evident thus.

Look under what notion God commanded it to be applyed, under that notion and consideration *Abraham* did apply it: That *Abraham* did apply it under that notion as the seal or token of the Covenant, as he was commanded, is undeniable, from the forementioned testimony that God gave of him.

Now that God did command it to be applyed under that notion and consideration, is evident, because in the Command, concerning the application of it, he calls it the Covenant; *My Covenant shall be in your flesh*: that is, the token of my Covenant, and that is the token of it.

2. That what *Abraham* did was according to the will and appointment of God, this is past doubt by what is already said; *Abraham* acted in circumcising his Children according to the express command he had received from God; so that the Assumption is in every branch and clause of it undeniable.

Secondly, For the Consequence in the Major Proposition, *viz.* That in as much as *Abraham* did apply the seal or token of the Covenant, as now expressed, it must needs follow, that God in this Promise did intend his immediate natural seed, as the first subjects of it: The validity of this Consequence, if any shall question it, will appear these three wayes.

First, From the sameness of the word used in the Promise and in the Command, concerning the application of the seal: The Promise is, *To thee and thy Seed*; the Command is, *Thou shalt therefore keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed*.

Now who can once imagine, that this term Seed should be used restrictively in the Promise, as intending only one or some of *Abraham*'s Children; exclusive of the rest, and universally

sally in the Command, intending all his Children.

That it is to be understood universally in the Command, is past all doubt; God explains himself in the very next words, *Every Man-child amongst you shall be circumcised.*

Now those that should take this term Seed restrictively in the Promise, had need for their acquitment in the sight of God for their so doing, have as clear a warrant from God as *Abraham* had, to take it in an unlimited sence in the Command; whether they have so or no, concerns them to look to it.

Secondly, It appears from hence, because otherwise the seal or token of the Covenant should, and that according to the appointment of God, be applyed to some, unto whom it signified and betokened nothing at all; it should be applyed, and that as the seal or token of the Covenant, to some wholly uninteressed and unconcerned in the Covenant, of which it was the seal or token.

Now how remote is it from a rational probability, that God should appoint the token of the Covenant, and that under that notion and consideration as the token of it, to be applyed to persons neither externally nor internally interessed or concerned in the Covenant, of which it was the token, let but any sober person exercise his reason, and see whether there be so much as the remotest probability of it.

It's

In's sense, God might have commanded the same thing to have been acted upon persons, under another notion or consideration, for some special end appointed by himself; but that he should appoint the same action, with reference unto all, and that to be performed under one and the same notion and consideration, and yet, that some of these should be in Covenant, and others not at all concerned in it, is a thing not to be supposed by any man, that hath the free use of his own reason.

Thirdly, It appears, because in case the seal or token of the Covenant had been applyed to any in the sence afore expressed, no way interessed or concerned in the Covenant, nor the Promise thereof, then God had spoken that which had been absolutely false, which far be it from any man, that pretends to Christianity, once to imagine: yet the denying the same persons to be intended in the Premise, that were intended in the Command, concerning the application of the seal, doth necessarily infer it. For pray observe it: Saith the Lord of Circumcision, *It shall be the token of the Covenant between me and you*, Gen. 17. 11. Now had any of these male-children, whose circumcision is commanded in the foregoing verses, been wholly unconcerned in the Covenant, then it could not have been a token of the Covenant between God and them; and consequently it had been false to say, it should be a token of the Covenant between him and them: for according to the opinions in this

first

first Proposition opposed, it was not the token of the Covenant between God and them; inasmuch as the male-children now intended, were not in the Covenant, or there was no Covenant between God and them.

Now for God to command, that every Male-child amongst them should be circumcised; and then to say of Circumcision, as so applyed, that it should be a token of the Covenant between him and them, whereas there was some of those Male-children wholly unintereſſed in this Covenant, or betwixt God and whom there was no such Covenant, had been absolutely false; for if it was not, it could not possibly be a token of the Covenant between God and them, between him and whom there was no Covenant: there can be no token of a Covenant between whom there is no Covenant made: But now saith God, *It shall be a token of the Covenant between me and them*: So that to grant, that *Abraham*, according to the will and appointment of God did apply the seal or token of the Covenant to all his immediate natural Seed, and that as the seal or token of the Covenant, and yet to affirm, that some of his natural Seed were not in Covenant, or not intended in the Promises thereof, is to ascribe falshood unto God, or to charge him with speaking what was absolutely false.

And therefore undoubtedly *Abraham*'s whole natural Seed were intended in the Promise, as the immediate and next subjects of it.

Secondly,

Secondly, Let us instance in such of *Abraham*'s immediate Children, as upon supposition of their being intended in the Promise, under consideration, it will undoubtedly follow, that all his immediate Children were in it: and thus I shall instance in these two of his Children, that the Scripture makes more frequent mention of, *viz. Ishmael* and *Isaac*: and I shall begin with the latter first.

First, That *Isaac* was intended in this Promise, as one of the Subjects of it, is fully evident from that one passage of God to *Abraham*, *Gen.* 21. 12. cited and expounded by the Apostle, *Rom.* 9. 7 8. *In* Isaac *shall thy seed be called.* We read in the tenth verse, *Sarahs* request to *Abraham*, to cast out *Hagar* and her Son *Ishmael*: Now this was grievous to *Abraham*. God had promised to be a God to him and to his seed: *Ishmael* is one of his Seed, hence to cast him out, and thereby disinherit him of the blessing promised, was very grievous to *Abraham*. Now God to allay *Abraham*'s grief tells him, Though he should answer *Sarahs* request, yet *in* Isaac *should his Seed be called*; that is, in *Isaac* and his line the Promise should have its accomplishment. Though *Ishmael* was cast out, and thereby disinherited of the good promised, yet the Promise should stand firm, and receive its full accomplishment in *Isaac* and his line, which could not have been, had he not been intended in the Promise: had not *Isaac* been intended, not exclusive of others, but inclusive of himself, the

the Promise could not have received its accomplishment in him, but had failed in the ejection of *Ishmael*: and hence the Apostle tells us, That *Abraham* sojourned in *Canaan*, as a Stranger in a strange Land, with *Isaac* and *Jacob*, heirs with him of the same Promise: Of what Promise? Surely of that, wherein God engaged himself to be a God to him, and to his Seed, and to give him and them the Land of *Canaan* for an everlasting possession: both these Promises are joyned together as one Promise, *Gen.* 17. 6. Now of this Promise *Isaac* was an heir with *Abraham*, and therefore must needs be included in it as one of the Subjects of it.

Secondly, That *Ishmael* was intended as part of *Abraham*'s Seed in this Promise, is evident by this one Consideration.

Not to multiply, where truth is sufficiently evident, *viz.* His ejection out of *Abraham*'s Family, and his being disinherited of the Covenant and Promise thereby.

It's true, his bare ejection out of *Abraham*'s Family would not demonstrate his being in *Abraham*'s Covenant, and under the Promise thereof; while in his Family he had Servants in his house who yet might be after cast out, but that would not conclude them to have had an interest in his Covenant: but now as by that his ejection out of *Abraham*'s Family, he was disinherited of, or divested in the Promise, or was divested of his right and title to it, doth undeniably evidence his right and title to it

antece-

antecedent to that his ejection; for he could not be divested or disinherited of that he never had, or was never an heir unto.

Now that *Ishmael*, with and by means of his rejection out of *Abraham*'s Family, was divested of a right and title he afore had to the Covenant, and to the promises thereof, is evident by these two Reasons.

First, Because his ejection was typical of their ejection out of the Gospel Church, and rejection from the benefits and blessings of the Covenant of Grace, who under a Profession of Christianity, or of being the Covenant people of God, do adhere to the Law for Righteousness and Life. That *Ishmael*'s casting out of *Abraham*'s Family was thus typical, is expressly affirmed by the Apostle, *Gal* 4.30. compared with the foregoing Context.

Now his bare ejection out of *Abraham*'s Family, could not have made him a proper type of the persons beforementioned, in as much as then there had been no direct Analogy or proportion between the type and antitype. How his meer casting out of *Abraham*'s Family should represent, or foreshew, and predict the ejection of the persons forementioned out of the Gospel Church, and divestment of all title to the benefits and blessings of the Covenant of Grace cannot be imagined; for as much as others might be cast out of *Abraham*'s Family, whose ejection was not of any such typical signification.

Secondly,

Secondly, That *Ishmael*, together with and by means of his ejection out of *Abraham's* Family, was divested of a right and title, which, while in his house, he had to the Covenant and promises thereof, is evident, because *Sarah*, in her request to *Abraham* to cast him out, proposed that as her end, *viz.* That he might not inherit with *Isaac* her Son; *Gen.* 21. 10. *Cast out this bond woman and her son, for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.* And that it was the good promised in this Covenant, that she desires his disinheriting of, is evident by *Abraham's* grief; had it been only the temporal possessions of *Abraham*, his not inheriting of which she proposeth as her end, in desiring his ejection, there had been no reason of *Abraham's* grief, inasmuch as he was under the promise of outward blessings, notwithstanding that his ejection. Now there had been no reason for *Sarah*, to propose that end in her request, to have him cast out, unless he had, and would continue to have had, during his abode in the house, a like visible right and title to the Promise, that *Isaac* had, she might have desired his ejection for some other reason, but for that, that he might not inherit with *Isaac*, she could not rationally do, it would have been an impertinent reason, for her to have desired his ejection, that he might not inherit with her own Son, in case he had no right nor title to the promised Inheritance, whilst in the house.

For a woman to desire her Husband to cast out

out a Servant out of the family for that reason, that he might not inherit with her own Children, when as whether he should continue or be cast out of the family, he could lay no claim to to the Inheritance, would be ridiculous: Hence *Sarah* pleading that reason, or propounding that end of her request, plainly implies, that *Ishmael*, during his abode in *Abraham's* family, had at least a visible right and title to the inheritance promised, which would be disanulled by that his ejection: Hence it is evident, *Ishmael*, as well as *Isaac*, was intended in that Promise, and that both were joynt Heirs to, or Subjects of that Promise, as externally made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed.

Now then seeing these two, *viz.* *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, were intended, there can be no reason imagined, why *we* should suppose *Abraham's* other Children to be excluded; for they were either elected or not elected; if they were, their case was the same with *Isaac's*; if not, their case was the same with *Ishmael's*; and therefore both *Ishmael* and *Isaac* being intended, there is no shew of reason to suppose the other excluded: but we may partly from the parity of their cases, with the case of the one or the other of these two, and partly from the evidence of the foregoing Arguments, positively conclude, that all *Abraham's* natural Seed, according to the intendment of this first proposition, were included in this promise, as the first and next subject of it; but let that suffice for the proof of the first proposition.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Objections against the first Proposition considered and answered.

THus having seen somewhat (for much more might be produced) of that evidence the Scriptures give in, for the confirmation of this first Proposition, I shall now consider the Objections I have yet met with, or can possibly imagine may be made, that have any appearance of weight in them, against the truth hitherto asserted and pleaded for. That which I plead for is this, That God in that grand Promise of the Covenant, wherein he engaged himself to be a God to *Abraham* and his seed in their generations, intended his natural Seed, and that indefinitely one as well as another, immediately proceeding from his own loins, as the immediate and next subjects of it. Now at least some (I suppose not all) of those, whose judgment and practice vary from the truth pleaded for, will contend, that this term Seed is to be understood in a restrained sense, as only intended of some part of *Abraham*'s immediate Children, to the excluding of the rest, and that it is not to be extended to all indefinitely. But yet, I

 suppose,

suppose, they are not agreed among themselves, which to assign as the proper Subject of this Promise; some have denied *Isaac* to be the seed or part of the seed here intended; others, and I suppose the major part of our opposers, deny that *Ishmael* was intended, or ought to be accounted as part of the seed here spoken of. As for their that judge *Isaac* was not intended in this Promise, the only ground they go upon, for ought I have yet met with, is this Supposition, *viz.* That God made a twofold Covenant with *Abraham* and his Seed, the one a legal or temporal Covenant, consisting only in temporal promises, and requiring only an external obedience; the other a Covenant of Grace, consisting of spiritual promises, and requiring internal and spiritual obedience; and they conceive, that this Covenant entred with *Abraham* and his Seed, mentioned *Gen.* 17. 7. was only a legal or temporal Covenant; and that the Covenant of Grace is that formerly spoken of, *Gen.* 12. 3. and again re-established with *Isaac* at the nineteenth verse of this seventeenth Chapter: And then the Objection that the persons of this perswasion raise against our Proposition in the sense given, is to this purpose: That this term Seed is not to be understood in that extensive sense given of it, in as much as this Covenant, mentioned in this seventh verse, was only a temporal or legal Covenant established with *Abraham*, as a natural Father, and his fleshly seed, and not the Covenant of Grace established with him, as a spiritual Father, and with his spiritual

spiritual seed, now *Isaac* being a child of promise, and consequently to be accounted of *Abraham's* spiritual seed, could not be intended in that promise, which alone intended his fleshly or natural seed.

Ans. I answer, That *Isaac* in particular was intended in this Promise, and that as a principal Subject of it, as it respected *Abraham's* natural seed, hath been already proved, and as for the Objection now made, it involves the framers of it in such absurdities and contradictions, and supposing it granted, would so little advantage the cause, the promotion of which is in the ultimate design of it aimed at, that it needs no reply at all; I shall therefore only in a direct opposition to that Supposition, this Objection is grounded upon, affirm, that there was but one Covenant established between God and *Abraham*, and his seed, and that was a Covenant of Grace, and the very same for substance that believers are now under, and consequently that that Promise in *Gen.* 12. 3. was either a branch of this Covenant, or rather the very same promise with this, under consideration, expressed in other terms. And that that Covenant mentioned verse 19. is the same with this mentioned ver. 7. There are several branches of this general Assertion; As,

First, That there was but one Covenant made and established between God and *Abraham*, with reference to himself and his seed; I do not say,

that there was but one Covenant made with the Seed of *Abraham*, understanding that term Seed of his Race or Posterity in following ages; but I say, there was but one established with *Abraham*, wherein himself in common with his Seed, was concerned; now this appears from the constant stile of Scripture alwayes, where speaking of the Covenant made with *Abraham*, speaking in the singular number, the Covenant, and not in the plural, Covenants.

Secondly, I say, this was a Covenant of Grace.

Thirdly, That it was the very same Covenant for substance that Believers are now under.

Fourthly, That that Promise, *Gen.* 12. 3. is one branch of the Covenant now established with *Abraham* and his Seed, or rather the same Promise with this mentioned, in our first Proposition expressed in different terms; these things I shall speak to hereafter, and the truth of them will, I doubt not, fully appear by the proofs of the second Proposition, and therefore I shall say nothing to them at present.

Lastly, That the Covenant mentioned verse 19. is the very same mentioned verse 7. this is sufficiently evident to any that will but read the whole Chapter. In the former part of the Chapter, we read how God promiseth to establish his

Covenant

Covenant with *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations for an everlasting Covenant, that is, to endure while *Abraham* should have a Seed upon earth. Now at verse 19. the Lord shews *Abraham*, in which of his Seed and his line, or posterity this Promise should take place, and have its accomplishment, and that was *Isaac*. Therefore observe how the Text runs, *And God said, Sarah shall bear thee a Son; and I will establish my Covenant with him.* Mark, here is no intimation of any other Covenant, different from that before mentioned; he doth not say, I will also make, or I will establish a Covenant, or another Covenant, but *I will establish my Covenant*: What Covenant? Doubtless that before entred in with *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed in their generations; and this limitation of the Covenant, as afore made and established, with *Abraham*, in reference to his Seed in their generations, unto *Isaac* alone, doth plainly imply, that in the first establishment of it, *Abraham's* whole Seed, as immediately proceeding from his own loins, were included and intended; for what need an explanatory limitation of it, in regard of the establishment thereof, for an everlasting Covenant to *Isaac* and his Seed, had it not been more comprehensive in the first promulgation of it; and it is as if the Lord should say, Though I have entred Covenant with thee, and thy Seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting Covenant, and have received and taken in thy whole Seed, as proceeding immediately from thine own loins, universally and

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indefinitely one as well as another, into a Covenant relation, together with thee with my self, yet my meaning is not that this Covenant-relation between me and thy Seed, shall be continued in each of their respective lines, throughout their respective generations; but it is with *Isaac* that I will establish my Covenant, and with his Seed, as the person in whom, and in whose Seed, my Covenant shall take place, and be accomplished; though thy whole Seed be intended in the Promise, as the next and immediate Subjects of it, yet the Promise in the full latitude and extent of it, as it runs to Seed in their generations, for a Promise to continue successively throughout all generations, shall only take place and receive its full accomplishment in *Isaac* and his Line: But not to spend time upon this, that *Isaac* was intended in this Promise is evident beyond all rational contradiction, and that is all at present I contend for.

Object. 2. Secondly, Others, and I suppose, vastly the major part of our opposers in the main truth pleaded for, conceive that it was *Isaac* alone intended as the only Subject of that Promise, and consequently that *Ishmael*, and the other children of *Abraham*, were excluded from any right or title to it; And there are three Objections made against our extending that Promise, to the including and taking in *Ishmael*, and the Sons of *Abraham* by *Keturah*, as the joint Subjects with *Isaac* of it.

First,

First, Say some, as God promised to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed, so he promised the Land of *Canaan* for an everlasting Possession to that Seed, to whom he promised to be a God; but the Land of *Canaan* was never given to, nor intended for either *Ishmael*, or any of *Abraham's* other Children by *Keturah*, or any of their Seeds, and therefore certainly neither *Ishmael*, nor any of *Abraham's* Seed by *Keturah*, could be intended in that Promise; for do we think that God would promise that which he never intended to give? or shall we think that God would promise the Land of *Canaan* to all *Abraham's* Seed, and yet never mind his promise after, nor regard to make good what he had promised?

Answ. To that I answer two things.

First, That, in that any of *Abraham's* Seed did not actually possess the Land of *Canaan*, nor in that God intended not that they should possess it, it is no Argument they were not intended in, as the Subjects of this grand Promise, wherein God ingaged to be a God to them in their generations: This is evident, because some, who were undoubtedly the Subjects of this Promise, never did, nor was it intended by God, that they should actually possess that Land; *Abraham* himself, who was the prime and principal party in this Covenant, according to the letter of it, and consequently the undoubted Subject of this Promise, as referring to himself, never had, nor was it intended by God, that he should have the actual possession of this

Land; so for *Isaac* and *Jacob*, Heirs with him of the same Promise, they never had, nor was it Gods intendment they should have, the actual possession of that Land. But

Two things are replyed to this.

First, Though they did not possess it in their own persons, yet in their posterity they did; their posterity had the actual possession of it, and God gave it unto them only as a reversion, to be possessed by their Children, when the sin of the Inhabitants was full.

To that I answer, It is certain all their posterity did not possess it, witness the whole race and posterity of *Isaac* descended by *Esau*.

But you will say, Yet some of their posterity did possess it, and that was enough to verifie the Promise unto them, considering under what notion it was promised, *viz.* as afore expressed, a reversion to be enjoyed by their posterity.

To that I answer, It is true, and so for what appears, the posterity of any or of all of *Abraham's* other Children, should have had the joynt possession with *Isaac* and *Jacob's* posterity, had not their Fathers forfeited their own and their posterities right and title to the Promise, and their not inheriting, through an antecedent forfeiture of the Promise, is no evidence that their first Parents, as immediately proceeding from *Abraham*, were not intended either in that

Secondly, It is replyed, that though *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* did not, nor was it promised by God, that they should in their own persons, nor in their time, as then upon earth, enjoy the Land of *Canaan*, yet there is a time when they shall have the personal enjoyment of it, they shall arise again, and during the thousand years reign of Christ upon earth, shall have the promise in the very letter made good unto them.

To that I answer, Not to divert to debates excentrical to our present Question, suppose that notion processe, I would say the same of *Ishmael*, and the other Children of *Abraham*, both he and they, with their respective posterities, supposing their not being finally cast out from the Covenant, and the Promises thereof, through their own or their Progenitors sin, shall partake with *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* in that their supposed felicity, and therefore neither their not actual possessing, nor Gods intention, that they should not actually possess that Land, will prove, that they were not intended in that grand Promise, their case was no other than the case of several others, who were undoubtedly intended in that Promise.

Secondly, I answer, That the Land of *Canaan* was either a mere temporal good, and the enjoyment of it only a temporal mercy, or else

it was a type and pledge of a higher good, viz. of that City that hath foundations, whose Maker and Builder is God; and answerably taking it as a type, it was a spiritual good, and the enjoyment of it a spiritual blessing, and an Heavenly part of the Covenant of Grace, the Land of Canaan must be looked upon under the one or the other of these notions, or under both, according to the letter under the former, according to the mystical or typical sence under the latter. Now let our Opposites tell us, how or under what notions they look upon that Land, the subject matter of that Promise: if they say they look upon it under the first notion, namely, as a temporal good, and the Jews possessing of it only as a temporal blessing, then, I say, it was only an appendant, and not pertaining to the essence of the Covenant, and the promise of it only a definite promise, made to *Abraham's* Seed, collectively or generally taken, and answerably the Promise was verified in that any of his Seed, had the possession of it: Indefinite promises, as made to any species or sorts of persons, collectively considered, are equivalent to particular promises, and they are verified, in case only some of that species, or sort of persons, have the good promised: That this promise of the Land of *Canaan*, supposing it to be only a temporal promise, is thus to be taken, is unquestionable from the way and manner of Gods performing of it, had it been a promise to *Abraham* and his Seed, distributively or particularly taken, it must have been made good to each particular

ticular Subject of the promise, both to *Abraham* and all his Seed universally, which it is evident it was not. If they say it was a spiritual promise, or the promise of a spiritual good, or higher and greater good typified by it, then I say it was of the Essence of the Covenant, and was either in the letter, or in the spiritual sence and meaning of it, performed both to *Abraham* and to all his Seed in their generations, whether *Isaac*, or *Ishmael*, or his Sons by *Keturah*, who did not through a failure in the performance of the condition of the Covenant, loose their right and title to the promise of it; that is, though they had not the good promised it self in the letter, yet they had the good typified by that Land, and principally intended in the Promise. A further proof of this I need not add than the Promise it self considered, in conjunction with the faithfulness of God in the performance of his Promise.

Thirdly, If they will say, they look upon it under both notions, which I conceive is most agreeable to the mind of God in that Promise; then I say as before, 'twas as a temporal promise, only an appendant to the Covenant, as a spiritual promise of the Essence of it, and answerably was made and made good to *Abraham*'s Seed, both collectively and distributively taken, in the sense afore opened; from all it evidently appears, that in that neither *Ishmael*, nor the Sons of *Keturah*, did, nor was it intended by God, that they should enjoy the Land of *Ca-*

naan,

not, it will not follow, that they were not interested in that grand Promise, wherein God engageth himself to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations, they might be united in that Promise, and yet not actually enjoy that Land promised, as many others, who were undoubtedly intended in the former Promise, yet never actually in the latter enjoyed the good of that Promise.

Object. 2. Say others, If *Ishmael* were intended in this Promise, and received as one of *Abraham's* Seed into his Covenant, why doth *Abraham* pray so earnestly for him, *Gen.* 17. 18? Doth not his praying so earnestly for him, at least strongly intimate, he had no right to, or interest in the Covenant afore established with *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed? If *Ishmael* was under the promise of having God a God to him, what need *Abraham* pray so earnestly that he might live before God?

Answ. I answer, May not a promised good be prayed for? Or may not a father pray that his child may live, grow up, and enjoy the good of promises relating to this life, and give comfortable discoveries of his interest in the Promises of the Covenant? Who can question, but that he may? But the true reason of *Abraham's* prayer for *Ishmael*, was an intimation given by God, in those promises made with reference to that child to be born of *Sarah*, of what is more plainly after expressed, that he

should

should be the special Child, in whom, and in whose line the Seed should be called; that being with whom and with whose Seed the Covenant should be established, according to the fulness, tenor and latitude of the promises of it; but this is no intimation at all, much less a conclusive Argument, that *Ishmael* was not at present taken into Covenant, and interested in the Promises of it, as one of the immediate Subjects thereof.

Object. 3. And that which by most of our Opposites is especially insisted upon, is a supposed inconsistency between what is affirmed in this our first Proposition, *viz.* That God in the grand *Promise* of the Covenant intended all *Abraham's* natural Seed universally and indefinitely, one as well as another, as the next and immediate Subjects of it, considering what the sacred Story relates of *Ishmael* in particular, one of *Abraham's* Seed, affirmed by us to be intended in that Promise, and other Principles and Assertions constantly maintained by us, who ground the Infant-seed of believing parents right to and interest in the Covenant, upon this its first establishment with *Abraham* and his Seed in their Generations; these Principles and Assertions, with which what is affirmed of all *Abraham's* natural Seed, and of *Ishmael* in particular, is supposed to be inconsistent, are more especially these two.

First, That that Covenant, now established with

with *Abraham*, was a Covenant of Grace, and the very same for substance with that under which Believers are under the Gospel administration.

Secondly, That the Covenant of Grace is an immutable and unchangeable Covenant, a Covenant that cannot be broken, a Covenant from a standing in which none can fall. Now it is objected, That if it be true as we affirm, that this Covenant, now established with *Abraham* and his Seed, was the Covenant of Grace, and that *Ishmael* in particular was intended in this Promise, and answerably taken into this Covenant with *Abraham*, as one of his Seed there intended, then the Covenant of Grace must be granted to be a mutable and changeable Covenant, a Covenant that may be broken, contrary to our other principles, seeing it is evident, and granted by us, that in case *Ishmael* was ever in this Covenant, he did break it, and was cast out of it, and was disinherited of the promise contained in it; and if so, then it will follow, contrary to what we elsewhere affirm, that a man may be in the Covenant of Grace to day, and cast out to morrow, and then may be in again within a few dayes after, and yet cast out again, and in the close finally perish. Now it is said, How can Principles or Assertions, lying in such a diametrical opposition one to another, be all true? Therefore sure we must either grant, that *Ishmael* was not intended in this Promise, and consequently not one of this Seed of *Abraham*,

with

with whom, in conjunction with *Abraham* himself, God never entred Covenant, unless this Covenant was not the Covenant of Grace, under which Believers now are; or else that the Covenant of Grace is mutable, and may be broken; that persons may be in it, and afterwards cut and dispossessed of that good they had sometimes a Covenant-right and title to.

Before I return a direct Answer to this Objection, I shall premise, that this Objection is urged by our Opposites to a twofold end or purpose.

First, It is urged by some, to disprove or overthrow what we affirm of this Covenant, now established with *Abraham* and his Seed, viz. That it is the Covenant of Grace, the same for substance that Believers in Gospel times are under. Say they, This Covenant made with *Abraham*, and his natural Seed, might be broken, but the Covenant of Grace cannot be broken; one might be in that Covenant to day, and cast out to morrow; witness *Ishmael*, who though taken into Covenant, yet was soon cast out again; but it is otherwise with the Covenant of Grace, and the persons admitted into it, that is, a Covenant that cannot be broken, persons once in that Covenant are never cast out again; and therefore this could not be a Covenant of Grace, but a legal Covenant, as some call it, a temporal Covenant, as others

Secondly,

[illegible] It is urged by others, in a way of [illegible] to what is [illegible] concerning *Ishmael* [illegible] intended in this Promise, and consequently received into Covenant with *Abraham*. These grant that this was a Covenant of Grace, and hold with us, that the Covenant of Grace of Grace is a Covenant that cannot be broken. Now say they, it is ridiculous to affirm, that *Ishmael* was in this Covenant, seeing it is certain he never enjoyed the good promised, which he should undoubtedly have done, had he been taken in as a party in it. The Covenant of Grace, say they, infallibly secures the good promised in it to all that have admission into it; it is a Covenant that is immutable, those that are once in it are never cast out, but shall infallibly enjoy the good promised: but *Ishmael* enjoyed not the good promised in this Covenant; therefore it is ridiculous to say, he was ever taken into it. So that we may see our Opposites are not agreed among themselves, some granting that *Ishmael* was intended in that Promise, and consequently that he was a party in that Covenant, but deny that that Covenant was a Covenant of Grace: Others granting, that that was a Covenant of Grace, but deny *Ishmael* to be a party in it, whence it appears, that in all these three Assertions, *viz.* that *Ishmael* was intended in that Promise, that the Covenant, in which the Promise is contained, is a Covenant of Grace. That the Covenant of Grace cannot be broken, we have the suffrage of some of our Opposites, as they are taken severally.

But

But you will say, They all agree, [illegible] be all true taken conjunctively: It is [illegible] do so; and where their mistake lies, [illegible] what we assum; or as to the truth it self, [illegible] be now considered.

First, And I shall first shew in what sence we hold and maintain the Covenant of Grace, to be an immutable and unchangeable Covenant, a Covenant that cannot be broken.

Secondly, Lay down some Propositions for the vindicating the truth asserted in this first Proposition, for carrying any appearance of repugnancy to that Principle held and maintained by us, in the sence it is held and maintained by us, concerning the immutability of the Covenant of Grace.

For the first: and thus we must observe a twofold distinction.

First, We must distinguish between an external and visible, and an internal and invisible being in Covenant, or between the Covenant of Grace, as externally and visibly, and as internally and invisibly plighted, or mutually entred between God and men; that there is an external and visible being in Covenant, or that there is an external and visible plighting, or mutual entring of Covenant between God and men, where yet there is not an internal and invisible being in Covenant, nor any internal mutual en-

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tring Covenant between God and men, is evident through the whole scripture, and is to demonstratively proved by others, especially Mr. *Cobbett* of *New-England*, that it is wholly superfluous to add any thing, I shall therefore only say, that unless we do grant this distinction, we must hold, that either Christ hath no visible Body, Church, or People in the World, or else that some may be of the visible Body, Church or People of Christ, who yet are not in any sence in the Covenant of Grace; the former sure none will affirm, and the granting the latter will grant what I contend for, as will appear in the process of our discourse.

Secondly, We must distinguish between being in Covenant, through a personal acceptation of the terms of the Covenant, and ingaging with God in a Covenant way, and being in Covenant, by vertue of the gratious tenour of the Covenant it self, as made with *Abraham* and his Seed, in their generations; that there is a being in Covenant by a personal acceptance of the terms of the Covenant, and ingaging with God in a Covenant way, will be denied by none; and that there is a being in Covenant, or being under the promises of the Covenant, by vertue of the gracious tenour of the Covenant it self, will I hope sufficiently appear from the proof of this and our next Proposition. Now when we say, the Covenant of Grace is an immutable and unchangeable Covenant, a Covenant that cannot be broken, we intend it of the Covenant as personally,

sonally, and that inwardly and sincerely closed by a truly regenerate Soul, and not of the Covenant as only externally and visibly entered by Hypocrites, nor of the Covenant as made with believing Parents, with reference to their natural seed; and the meaning of what is affirmed concerning the immutability and unchangeableness of the Covenant of Grace is only this, that when once a Soul is savingly wrought upon, to a rightly closing in with Christ, and a saving closing with the terms of the Covenant, that Soul shall never totally and finally fall away, so as to suffer an absolute and total loss of that Grace wrought in it, nor be absolutely cast out of a Covenant state and relation God-ward; whether these premises, upon the warrant of which this immutability and unchangeableness of the Covenant is asserted and maintained, will prove any more, shall be considered, at least so far as concerns my present purpose, by and by. Having then given the sense, in which we hold the Covenant of Grace to be immutable and unchangeable, I proceed to the second thing promised, the Propositions, and they are these.

First, That this Covenant now established between God and *Abraham*, and his seed in their generations, which I grant, yea affirm, that it was a Covenant of Grace, the same in substance that Believers are still under, was and still is a conditional Covenant. Let not this term *conditional* offend, I intend no more than

what I suppose will on all hands be granted, *viz.* That as God promised good to *Abraham*, with reference both to himself and his Seed in their generations; so he required the performance of duty as from *Abraham* himself, so from his Seed in their respective generations: In brief thus, this Covenant contained promises of good from God, yet with a restipulation of duty from the parties with whom it was made, and unto whom the promises did appertain; and this is essential to the very being of a Covenant as properly taken: It is true, this term Covenant is variously used in Scripture, sometimes for a bare promise on Gods part, sometimes for the restipulation on mans part, sometimes for the token of the Covenant; but these are improper significations of the word; when it is properly taken, it alwayes signifies a mutual compact between God and man, wherein God ingageth himself by promise to them, and ingageth them to the performance of what himself hath constituted to be their duty: a Covenant in general when properly taken, and consequently this Covenant in particular, which must partake of the general nature of Covenants, every Species must partake of its Genus, being *quiddam complexum*, implying two or more parties covenanting; so two parties covenanted, the giving of some good on the one part, and the return of some performance on the other, and that as indispensably necessary to the preservation of the Covenant inviolate on each part.

Secondly,

Secondly, That this restipulation or condition on *Abraham's* part, did concern him, both as a single person, and as a Parent, standing in a parental relation towards his Seed; taking in as joynt parties with himself into covenant: my meaning is evident, *Abraham* stood in a double capacity, as a single party, with whom God entred covenant, and as a father of children, to whom the promises of the Covenant did in common with himself appertain. Now as *Abraham*, as a single person in covenant, was to accept of, and perform the conditions of the Covenant, he was in that capacity ingaged to by God, so as a parent he had something of duty incumbent upon him, with reference to his Seed; as immediately descending from his own loins; and as his faithful performance of that duty incumbent upon him in his single capacity, so his performing that duty incumbent upon him as a parent, in reference to his Seed, was absolutely necessary in order to his enjoying the good promised, with reference both to himself and his Seed: The truth of this Proposition is evident from those two places of Scripture, compared together; *Gen.* 17. 1. and *Gen.* 18. 19. *Walk before me, and be thou perfect.* There was *Abraham's* duty, with reference to himself as a single person, with whom the Covenant was entred; *for I know him, that he will command his Children, and his Household after him, and they shall keep judgment and justice, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him*; that is, that he may be a God to him,

and his Seed after him: There was *Abraham's* duty, as a Parent and Master of a Family, and under this term *Command* all other duties, subjecting or referring to their walking in the way of the Lord, were implyed and comprehended. Now saith the Lord, *Abraham will then command his Children and Houshold, that the Lord may bring upon him what he hath spoken of him*: Whence it appears, that *Abraham's* performance of his duty towards his Children and Houshold, was a necessary condition of Gods bringing upon him, or making good to him, what he had promised, in reference to his Children and Houshold, and that without the performance of that duty he could not expect, according to the true intent and meaning of the Promise, that God should bring that good upon him, or do that good to him; and what is said of *Abraham* is true of all his Seed, supposing them under that double capacity: *Abraham* was to be a pattern to all his Seed, both in privileges and in duties.

Thirdly, That whatever was the condition or stipulation of the Covenant as made with *Abraham*, was the condition or stipulation required of his natural Seed, and to be actually performed by them, in their own persons, so soon as they came to the maturity of age, as would render them capable thereof, and that as indispensably necessary to the compleating and continuance of their covenant relation with God, into which they, as *Abraham's* natural

Seed,

Seed, were admitted in their infancy; though God was pleased to enter covenant, not only with *Abraham* himself, but with his Seed together with him, and his accepting of the Covenant for himself and them, constituted a covenant-relation between God and *Abraham*, and his Seed; and that covenant-relation was continued during his Seeds infant capacity upon *Abraham*'s account, yet when they grew up to a capacity of a personal engaging with God in a Covenant way, and performing the stipulation required. Now the continuance of that covenant relation between God and them, indispensably required their personal accepting of, and performing that stipulation or condition, that *Abraham* in their infancy had accepted for them, and their non-acceptance or non-performance of that condition did, *ipso facto*, disanul the Covenant, or forfeit their right to, and interest in it and the promises of it; God stood the longer by vertue of that Promise obliged to be a God unto them; and for them to have supposed the continuance of that covenant-relation between God and them, into which they were afore admitted, and upon that account expected the good promised, without their personal performance of the duty the Covenant did oblige them to, had been a groundless presumption. The truth of this Proposition is evident in part from what hath been already said, and will more fully appear, when I come to the proof of my second Proposition. *Abraham*'s commanding his Children and Houshold to keep the way of

the Lord, in order to that end, namely, their enjoying the good promised necessarily supposeth it; for why should he command them to keep the way of the Lord, in relation to such an end, if their keeping that way had no necessary reference to that end, but the end had been attained without their keeping that way; besides, were not this true, there could have been no such thing, as breach of covenant, found among any of *Abraham*'s natural Seed, as will be obvious to every ordinary capacity. Before I proceed further, let me note by the way, that this Covenant, now established with *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations, implyed a twofold condition, necessary to be observed in order to Gods making good the promises of it, referring to his Seed.

First, There was a condition incumbent on *Abraham* himself, there was something of duty required of him, with reference to his Seed, *viz.* that he command them to keep the way of the Lord, as is observed in the foregoing Proposition.

Secondly, There was a condition incumbent upon the Seed, as grown up and become capable of understanding and performing it, that is, That they walk in the way of the Lord; and supposing that either *Abraham* had failed in his duty, or his Seed in theirs, God had been acquitted of any charge of unfaithfulness to his promise, though the good promised, with refe-

rence

rence to his Seed, had never been given in; God promiseth to be a God to *Abraham*'s Seed as well as to himself, yet with this condition, that he instruct and command his Seed, and that they accept of, and perform the duty engaged to by covenant.

Fourthly, That *Ishmael*'s breach of covenant did neither proceed from a failure on Gods part, in making good the Promises made to him, nor consist in his own loosing or falling from inherent Grace, but did wholly lye in his non-performance of that duty required, as indispensably necessary to the compleating and continuance of that Covenant-relation he was admitted into with God, and transgressing those Commands he was obliged to the observation of; in brief, he fell from a Covenant-state, but not from Covenanted-grace, for that he never had an actual possession of; so that to affirm that *Ishmael* was in the Covenant, now established with *Abraham* and his Seed, and that that Covenant was the Covenant of Grace that Believers are still under, notwithstanding his breach of Covenant in the sence now opened, is no way inconsistent with what is affirmed concerning the immutability of the Covenant of Grace, we freely grant, and our Opposites must grant it too, unless they will admit of these absurdities aforementioned, viz. that persons may be in an external Covenant-state, Godmanded, and yet want the truth of Grace, may be in a Covenant-state, though not loose Covenanted-

Grace,

Grace, or fall from a State of Grace. But not to leave any doubt, that may arise in the minds of any, about what hath been said, and shewed, I am aware of one Objection, and that not without a seeming weight and strength in it, will be made against what hath been said, and that is this.

Object. It will be said, Doth not the Scripture plainly intimate, if not positively assert, That the Covenant of Grace cannot be broken, in the sense in which it is now supposed *Ishmael* did break it, and is not that at least one Characteristical difference between the Covenant of Grace and the first Covenant, and the peculiar excellency, in respect of which the Covenant of Grace doth excel that former Covenant, that God promised to write his Law in the inward parts, and put his fear in the hearts of all that have admission into his Covenant, as the means to prevent their breach of it? How it will be said, How could *Ishmael*, or any Child of believing Parents, supposing he was, and they are in the Covenant of Grace, fail in performing the conditions of that Covenant, unless God should fail in making good those promises, which to affirm would be blasphemy, and therefore sure, had he been and were they in the Covenant of Grace, he never had, nor they never would break Covenant, although failing in performing the conditions of it.

Now

Now to this I answer, That take these Promises as indefinitely laid down, so they are only made to the Church indefinitely as a collective body, and in future Promises, as so made, do not infallibly secure the good promised to every individual person externally interested in them.

But you will say, Suppose the truth of this first Proposition, viz. That *Abraham*'s natural Seed, immediately proceeding from his own loins, were to be looked upon as the Subjects of this Promise, distributively taken, then every one in particular had a real and actual interest in it.

To that I answer, It is true: but consider what hath been already said; the Covenant and Promise of it were conditional, and his not performing the conditions forfeited the good promised.

But you will further say, Are not these promises, of writing the Law in the inward parts, &c. included in that grand Promise, wherein God promiseth to be a God to him and them, and consequently their performance of the condition was virtually included and implyed in the Promise it self, and so the Promise did secure their performance of the condition, though the Covenant of Grace hath conditions, yet they are *Conditiones conditionatæ*, conditions which are themselves promised in the Covenant, hence though the Covenant be not absolutely unconditional, yet it is equivalent thereunto, in as much as the conditions are themselves

selves included in the Promises of the Covenant, and therefore sure if they had been actually under Covenant, their performance of the conditions had been secured by this Promise.

To this I answer two things, That though these Promises do hold forth the main and principle conditions of the Covenant, as Regeneration, Faith, Repentance, and the like, and they should be included in this Promise, of Gods being a God to his people, and though they run in the external tenour of them absolutely, yet they are not absolutely absolute, as I may so speak; they have a subordinate condition, and that is, that the parties concerned in them do faithfully use the means appointed of God, in a subserviency to this working in or bestowing upon them the good promised; this is evident from *Ezek.* 36. 37. where we have the very same good, though in other terms or phrases, promised; so also in *Prov.* 2. 6. these Promises hold forth what we of our selves cannot attain to or perform, but they suppose, and require our use of means, which, as Mr. *Fenner* excellently expresseth it, lye between our can and our cannot; and though it is true, a man, while in his natural estate, cannot use the means so, as shall infallibly secure the good promised to himself, yet his not using of them according to what, through the improvement of what ability, whether natural or spiritual, he hath received, he might do will acquit God from unfaithfulness in denying the good promised.

But

But secondly, I answer, That take the Covenant as externally made and declared to *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations, as implying a stipulation on Gods part, and a restipulation on mans part, so these Promises of divine teachings, writing the Law in the heart, &c. are not included as essential to this Promise, of Gods being a God to them, but are distinct Promises, made indefinitely, to the Covenant-people of God; in making good of which, God acts according to his Soveraign will and pleasure, in a complyance with his eternal Decrees and Purposes of election and preterition, and answerably, no individual person can lay an actual claim to them, afore they are at least initially or inchoatively fulfilled; Gods being a God to any individual person, doth require and presuppose, that they do for the present, supposing them capable, or for the future, as soon as capable, take God in Christ as their God, which that his Elect shall do, is secured by these Promises; but that every individual person externally in Covenant, and under the Promises thereof shall do, is not secured by them. If any shall affirm, that these Promises are included, as an essential part of the good of that grand Promise of the Covenant, it concerns them to make good what they affirm, and shew how the very same Promise, at least for the sublimeness of it, was made good to the seed of the Jews, and how it came to pass, notwithstanding that Promise, that they never had their hearts truly circumcised to love the Lord with all their hearts, and all their souls,

as

as the letter of that Promise; Deut. 30. 6. affirms they should, Besides, let it be further noted, that the Covenant relation stablished between God and the seed of believing Parents, merely by vertue of the external tenour of the Covenant, is not so full and compleat as that is, which is constituted through a Souls personal acceptation of the Covenant, and actual ingaging with God in a Covenant way; the Covenant in a proper and full sence must be mutual; but so it is not in the case of the Infant-seed of believing parents, their being in covenant is rather a being under a conditional Promise of the good contained in the Covenant, than being properly and compleatly in covenant with God, though in a sence God may, as he is in Scripture said to enter covenant with them, he enters covenant as he makes promise of the good of the Covenant to them, which yet he doth, as I have said, only conditionally, and the compleating of the Covenant-relation between God and them, depends upon their personal acceptance of the terms proposed in it, when they come to ripeness of years.

To put a close to this first subordinate Proposition, by what hath been said, I suppose, the truth asserted in it is sufficiently evident; notwithstanding what may be objected in a way of opposition to it; and I have insisted the longer upon this, because it is the foundation to our whole structure to be raised, in reference to the confirmation of the truth pleaded for, and the full evidencing of this, will make our way plain

to

to the following Propositions, in as much as *Abraham*, being the first person with whom the Covenant was, at least in such a latitude, formally and expresly entred, he must needs be the rule, measure or pattern, according to which the Covenant, in all following Ages, should be entred and continued between God and his Seed. *Primum in unoquoque genere est regula aut mensura ceterorum ejusdem generis.* God did in *Abraham* set a pattern how he would deal in relation to the tenour of his Covenant with all his Seed; and *Abraham* being a Father of all admitted into a Covenant-relation with God. It highly concerns us, rightly to understand and know the terms and tenour of the Covenant, as made with him, in reference to us who are his Seed; it being made with his Seed in the same tenour, and upon the same terms generically considered, as it was with him; he was the great pattern, as I have said, both of priviledges and duties to his whole Seed, as will appear more fully in our second Proposition, which I now proceed to.

CHAP. IV.

The second subordinate Proposition laid down. How to be understood, declared.

The first way of its confirmation, viz. the renewal of the Promise, as at first made to Abraham; *proposed and prosecuted.*

Objections answered.

The Second Proposition.

THat the same Promise that God made unto Abraham, *with reference to himself and his natural Seed, is by God himself, and that in the same latitude and extent, given to, and setled upon believing Gentiles? The Promise runs in the same tenour, both in regard of extent and limitation, to* Abrahams *Seed, whether natural or mystical, that it ran in to* Abraham *himself; it is continued to the Seed, as it was first established with their Father. Only for the preventing mistakes let it be noted, That* Abraham *had some prehemineney above any of his Seed, as it was meet the Father should have something of preheminency above his Children.* Abraham *had a twofold prehemi-*

First,

First, He had a preheminence in point of paternity or fatherhood; he was not only a natural Father of natural Children, as any of his Seed may be; but he was constituted a mystical Father, to all that should in after ages be admitted into the same Covenant with himself, whether Jews or Gentiles, Rom. 4. 11.

Secondly, He had a preheminency in regard of his natural Seed, Race or Posterity. He had a threefold preheminency in regard of his natural Seed.

First, In their multiplication. God never multiplied the Seed of any Believer as he multiplied the natural Seed of *Abraham*.

Secondly, In their segregation or separation from other people, and their incorporation together as one Nation, Body politick, or Commonwealth.

Thirdly, In Gods singling them out as the special Subjects of his Kingdom, and vouchsafing unto them his Covenant, with the benefits, priviledges, and blessings thereof, in so general and extensive a way, as he hath done, and will yet do. His Church or spiritual Kingdom, under the first Testament, consisted in a special manner of *Abraham's* natural Race or Posterity, and he will again take his natural Posterity, as the people who in a special manner shall

injoy the good things of the Covenant of Grace as yet to be administred in the world: This twofold preheminency we grant that *Abraham* had above any of his Seed, whether natural or mystical; But yet take *Abraham* as a natural Father, accepting of the Covenant God made with him, and so the same Promise, that was given unto him, is given and setled upon his whole Seed, and consequently (which only falls under our present consideration) is given to, and setled upon believing Gentiles. The truth of this Proposition I shall (the Lord assisting) evidence four wayes.

First, From the tenour of the Promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, at the first establishment of the Covenant between God and him; and here we must have recourse to what hath been already said, for the explication of this Promise. The sum of all is this; That when God promised *Abraham* to be a God to him, and his Seed in their generations, his meaning was, that he would be a God both to *Abraham* and his whole Seed, as before explained in their respective generations; that is, to them and their respective Children, descending immediately from their own loins; yet so, as that their interest in the Promise, and enjoyment of the good promised, should be continued and vouchsafed to them upon condition of their walking in the steps of the faith and obedience of their Father *Abraham*; and consequently, that the Promise did not actually appertain either

rect to any of *Abraham's* natural Race or Posterity, beyond his Children immediately descending from him, or to any of his Seeds, Races, or Posterities, beyond their immediate Children, included with them in that phrase, *their Generations*, by vertue of that their remote relation unto them. Now then all that I have to do for the proving the settlement of this Promise, in the same extent and latitude upon believing Gentiles, in which it was given to *Abraham* himself, by the tenour of the Promises as now made to *Abraham*, is to prove, that this is the true sence and meaning of this Promise, as made to him with reference to his natural Seed, for look as the Promise was to be understood as referring to his natural Seed, so it is to be understood as referring to his mystical Seed, in as much as both are equally and alike intended in the Promise, as at first made unto *Abraham*, both his natural and mystical Seed standing in one and the same capacity respective to the Promise, and therefore as it ought to be interpreted as it had reference to the one, so it ought to be interpreted as referring to the other. Now that this Promise, as referring to *Abraham's* natural Seed, was to be interpreted and understood in the extent and latitude, and yet with the limitations before expressed, I shall make good by these two or three Arguments.

First, That must needs be the true sence and meaning of this Promise, which alone is consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God

in performing it. But that ſence and meaning, which is given according to the extent and limitations above expreſſed, is only conſiſtent with the truth and faithfulneſs of God in performing it: Therefore that ſence and meaning muſt be the alone true and genuine ſence and meaning of it; and anſwerably is to be interpreted and underſtood by us. That we ought to interpret and underſtand the Promiſes of God in ſuch a ſence and meaning, as is conſiſtent with his truth and faithfulneſs in performing them, and when there is but one ſence and meaning conſiſtent with the truth and faithfulneſs of God, that that muſt be the alone true ſence and meaning, ſure none will deny. God is a true and faithful God, a God that cannot lye, not only will not, but cannot lye; therefore that ſence and meaning put upon his Promiſes, which is conſiſtent with his truth and faithfulneſs in performing them, cannot poſſibly be the true ſence and meaning of them. Now that the ſence and meaning put upon this Promiſe, according to the extent and latitude, and with the limitations before expreſſed, is alone conſiſtent with the truth and faithfulneſs of God in performing it, will be evident, by ſhewing the inconſiſtency of any other ſence and meaning poſſibly to be put upon it, with the truth and faithfulneſs of God in performing it. And for this let us a little inquire what other ſence and meaning can poſſibly be put upon this Promiſe, and I ſuppoſe the only ſence and meaning that will be attempted to be put upon it, will be this, viz.

That

that when God promised to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, to be a God unto them in their generations, the meaning of that is, That he would be a God to each of them in their respective ages or generations wherein they should live; and so by this phrase, *in their generations*, we are to understand only each particular or individual person of *Abraham's* Seed, as subsisting in their respective ages or generations, and not as including Parents and Children.

Now let us a little pursue this sence and meaning, and see whether it be consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God in his Promises. And here let it be remembred, that *Abraham's* natural Seed must necessarily be primarily intended in this Promise, as the first and immediate Subjects of it; this hath been already proved, and therefore I shall take it for granted at present. And it must further be considered, that though *Abraham's* natural Seed, as immediately descending from his own loins, were firstly intended, as the primary Subjects of this Promise; yet it had a further respect, *viz.* to his whole natural Race and Posterity, as immediately descending from him, in succeeding ages; this is evident, as from other Scriptures, so from this very phrase, *their generations*, and besides, the whole Context evidently declares it to be so. *Gen.* 17. 10. It evidently appears, that God intended not, that *Abraham's* Seed should possess the Land of *Canaan* till the fourth generation; yet it is promised to the Seed intended

in this Promise, that they should have the Land of *Canaan*, and that for an everlasting possession; So that when God promised to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed, though he intended his own immediate Children, yet he had a further respect to his natural Race and Posterity, as mediately descending from him.

Now let it be considered, how it was consistent with the truth and faithfulness of God in his Promises, to promise to *Abraham*, to be a God to him, and his Seed, both immediately and mediately descending from him, seeing it is certain he was not a God to all his Seed, no not so much as in an external and outward way; for when *Ishmael* was cast out of *Abraham*'s Family, and together therewith, or thereby, out of the Covenant, God ceased to be a God to any of his Race or Posterity, unless by their personal acceptation of the Covenant, they became again incorporated into the Church of the Jews, as any other Heathen might be: and the like is true of *Esau*'s Race and Posterity; so for the whole body of the Jewish Nation at this day, there is a cessation of any actual Covenant relation between God and them. Now how could God cast off so great a part of *Abraham*'s Seed from being his people, and how could he cease to be a God to them, and yet remain faithful to his Promise, in case this be the sence and meaning of it? Yes, it may be some will say, the truth and faithfulness of God may be vindicated two wayes.

First

First, It may be vindicated by the consideration of the nature of this *Promise*. It was, as you your selves grant, an indefinite *Promise* made to *Abraham's* Seed collectively taken, and so was verified, in the performance of it to some of his Seed, though it was not performed universally to every individual person of his Seed.

But to this I reply two things.

First, That this *Promise*, according to the sence and meaning contended for by my Opposers, cannot be an indefinite *Promise* to *Abraham's* Seed, collectively taken, but must needs be a definite *Promise* to his Seed, distributively taken; for that is the sense and meaning contended for, That God promised to be a God to *Abraham*, and each of his Seed in their respective ages or generations. Now, according to this sence, this term *Seed*, must needs be taken distributively, as meant of every one of *Abraham's* Seed: So that whenever, in any generation, *Abraham* had one born unto him, as one of his Seed, the *Promise* did reach and take in him, or her, as so born unto him, as one of the Subjects intended in it. If it had been only said to *Abraham*, to thee and to thy Seed, it might have been an indefinite *Promise* to his Seed, collectively taken; but when 'tis added, in their generations, according to this sence it must needs be a definite *Promise* made to his Seed, distributively or singularly taken; and consequently, Gods not being a God unto any

of

of his Seed, had been a breach of this Promise, as made unto *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed.

Secondly, I answer, Though the Promise were an indefinite Promise made to *Abraham*'s Seed, collectively taken, yet none ever did, or ever should fail of enjoying the good promised, supposing there had been no failure in performing the condition of it, either by the parties themselves, or by their next or remote Progenitors.

Secondly, It may be it will be said, The Promise was made conditionally, and *Abraham*'s Seed failing in the performance of the conditions, disobliged God from making good the Promise to them.

To that I reply, That it is readily granted, that this Covenant, and the Promises thereof, was made to *Abraham* and his Seed conditionally: But observe it, according to the sence and meaning pleaded for by our Opposers, every Child of any Jew, or of any of *Abraham*'s Posterity, must be in the eye of this Promise accounted as one of *Abraham*'s Seed, and as so related unto him, be intended in it as one of the Subjects of it; And how can a Child forfeit its right to a Promise before it is born? So that suppose that the immediate Father had failed in the condition of the Promise, and thereby deprived himself of an interest in it, yet he could

not

but forfeit the Childs right, in so much as if this sence were true, the Child received no title right from the next Parent, but from *Abraham* himself, one of whose Seed this Child is; and hence it will unavoidably follow that either the whole Race and Posterity of *Abraham*, at least in their infancy, before an actual forfeiture made by themselves, must be under this Promise, and consequently in a Covenant relation with God, or else God hath failed in making good his Promise; neither of which those that contend for this sence will affirm; therefore this sence and meaning must unavoidably be relinquished, and there being no other sence and meaning imaginable, we must necessarily adhere to that aforegiven. And indeed should we not understand this Promise in the extent and latitude, and with those limitations before expressed, one of those absurdities will necessarily follow: for if so be we should understand it of all *Abraham*'s natural Seed, universally, both immediately and mediately descending from him, God must either be their God, or fail in his Promise, they receiving their right to, and interest in the promises, not from their immediate parents, as included with them in that phrase, *their generations*, but from *Abraham* himself; which right and interest they could not loose by the sin of any intermediate parent, they being notwithstanding the sin of such a parent, still *Abraham*'s Seed. And it being impossible, that they themselves, afore they are born, should forfeit their own right to it; and if we should grant, that parents and

children

children were included in that phrase, *their generations*, and not limit the promise to the particular generations of *Abraham*'s Seed, that is, to parents and their immediate children, the same absurdity will follow; for then the Seed of the Jews, who in their own persons forfeited their own right, would yet have a right to it, by vertue of the promise, as made to their progenitors in one or more generations past; and if to be the natural Seed of *Abraham* should convey a right to the promise, meerly as such, *viz.* as *Abraham*'s natural Seed, without consideration had to their own abiding in Covenant, still the same absurdities will follow; either the Infant-seed of the Jews must still be under the promise, or God is not faithful to his promises, neither of which will be affirmed (as I judge) by our Opposers. Now then this being the true sence and meaning of this promise, the truth pleaded for is past all question evident, *viz.* That as God promised *Abraham*, with reference to his natural Seed, immediately descending from him, that he would be a God to him, and them in their generations, so with reference to his mystical Seed, *viz.* Believing Gentiles, that he would be a God to him and them in their generations, the promise being made to *Abraham*'s whole Seed, whether natural or mystical, that God would be a God to them in their generations, and surely believing Gentiles are *Abraham*'s Seed, as well as his Children proceeding from his own loins, as shall be evidenced more fully by and by. But that is the 4th Argument,

mean, so prove that the sence and meaning given according to the extent and latitude, and the limitations afore expressed, is the true and genuine sence and meaning of this promise.

Argum. 2. My second Argument is this: God in his consequent transactions and dealings with the Seed of *Abraham*, in reference to covenant-ingagements between him and them, hath expounded that Promise according to the sence and meaning afore given; then that must needs be the true sence and meaning of it: but the former is true, therefore the latter. Sure if the after dealings of God with the Seed of *Abraham* do declare the sence and meaning of that Promise to be as we have afore given it, we need not doubt but 'tis the true and genuine sence and meaning of it; we cannot doubt but that God fully understands his own sence and meaning in that, as well as in all other his promises; we may well interpret promises as God himself doth, whether he do it in his Word or by his Works: Now that God hath expounded this promise according to the sence and meaning before given, is evident from that of *Deut.* 29. 10, 11, 12, 13. For observe it, when God deals with *Abraham's* Seed, in reference unto Covenant-engagements between him and them, he takes in not only Parents, but their Infants-seed with them and that as the accomplishment of this very promise. God now enters Covenant with the whole Congregation, in that

extent

extent and latitude that he promised to *Abraham*, that he would be a God to his Seed in their generations, including Parents and Children; he did not only enter Covenant with the Parents, as he had before promised to *Abraham*, to be a God to him and his Seed, but he enters Covenant with their Children! that is, he enters Covenant with them in their generations, and his entring Covenant with these Children or Infants, could not be, as they were, of the natural Race and Posterity of *Abraham*, for the Reasons before given; for if that promise ingaged God to enter Covenant with, or extend his Covenant to the Infants of these particular Parents, upon the account of their relation to *Abraham*, as of his Seed, there would be the same reason of continuing this Covenant-relation between himself and all *Abraham*'s natural Race and Posterity, while in their infancy, which he hath not done; and therefore he must needs take them now in upon the account of their immediate parents, by vertue of this promise, wherein he ingaged himself to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations: Besides, he enters Covenant not only with the natural Seed of *Abraham*, but with the Strangers then amongst them, and with their Seed, the Children of Strangers being still admitted into Covenant together with their parents: So that the manner of his now entring covenant with these particular Parents and Children at this time, as a clear and express explication of that phrase, wherein the promise was first made

to

to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, viz. That God would be a God to them in their generation. And as the Covenant was entred in this extent and latitude, in which the promise was at first made, so with the same limitations, as is evident from the Comination denounced against him that should apostatize to Idolatry, compare the twentieth with Chapter the thirteenth, verse the twelfth and thirteenth; The Seed of Idolaters was to be destroyed with the parents themselves, which could not have been, in case the promise had extended beyond the immediate Children: so that we have God himself expounding the true sence and meaning of this promise, and thus he expounds it in the latitude, and yet with the limitations before expressed.

Argum. 3. My third Argument is this, If the Prophets have interpreted this promise as to be fulfilled in Gospel times, in the extent and latitude before expressed, then we are to so interpret and understand it: but the former is true, therefore the latter.

But this will bring me to the second way proposed, for the evidencing of this our second Proposition, and therefore I shall not stay upon it at present.

From what hath been said it evidently appears, that this promise of the Covenant is to be understood according to the extent and latitude and yet with the limitations before given; this promise was made to *Abraham* and his Seed,

Seed, and answerably to his mystical Seed, believing Gentiles, as well as to his natural Seed: Here is no limitation of the promise to either sort or species of *Abraham's* Seed; 'tis no more limitted to his natural than to his mystical Seed, nor to his mystical than to his natural, but is made alike to both sorts of Seed; whoever bear this relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed, they are the Subjects intended in this promise, or they are under this promise, That God will be a God to them in their generations: Every believing Gentile stands related to *Abraham*, and answerably is to be looked upon in the same capacity, with reference to this promise, as *Isaac* did, though the foundation of the relation be different; yet the relation it self is one and the same, and the capacity of both, with reference to the Promise, alike, that we may say as the Apostle to something a different purpose, *We Brethren are as Isaac was*, we stand alike related to *Abraham*, as he did, and are the joynt Subjects of the promise with him: so that as God promised to *Abraham*, with reference unto him, that we would be a God to him in his generation, so he promised to *Abraham*, with reference to us believing Gentiles, that he would be a God to us in our generations; that phrase including, as then so still, Parents and Children: and that which gives further evidence to this truth is, that *Abraham's* natural Seed, as grown up, held their own interest, and conveyed an actual right to, and interest, in the promise, to their Children not as they were *Abraham's* natural Seed themselves,

selves, but as they were his mystical Seed (that is) did walk in the steps of his faith and obedience. Now let any man shew any reason why the promise in that extent and latitude should be restrained to *Abraham's* natural Seed, especially they, as grown up, inheriting the promise themselves, and conveying a right to it to their Children, as his mystical Seed, and not as his natural; I say, let any man shew any solid reason, why the promise in that extent and latitude should be restrained to them, and why the Gentiles should not enjoy it in the same extent and latitude that they did, seeing that God hath promised to be a God to *Abraham* and his whole Seed in their generations; certainly no rational ground can be given, and therefore we may positively conclude, that this promise, in the full latitude and extent of it, is given and confirmed to, and stated upon believing Gentiles, in the very full making of it unto *Abraham*.

CHAP. V.

The second way of the foregoing Propositions confirmation proposed and prosecuted; wherein it is proved, that by the Promises and Prophesies of the old Testament, relating to new Testament times, the good contained in this Promise is setled upon, and confirmed to some under the Covenant of Grace in new Testament times, and that it is no way restrained unto those immediately and directly concerned in those Promises and Prophesies, and consequently must needs be common to all under the same Covenant. The third way of the same Propositions confirmation, where it is proved, that the good contained in the forementioned Promise is, by the expres letter of the new Testament, setled upon and confirmed to believing Gentiles; the Scripture wherein that settlement is made produced: Objections of the said settlement answered.

SEcondly, The truth of this our second Proposition is further evident from the Promises and

and *Prophesies* of the old Testament; and thus the good contained in this *Promise* made to *Abraham* is, in the extent and latitude before expresst, given and confirmed to, and setled upon believing Gentiles, by the *Promises* and *Prophesies* of the old Testament, referring and relating to new Testament times: And thus we argue, What good is by promise and prophesie given to, and setled upon some under the Covenant of Grace in new Testament times, is by the same promise and prophesie given to, and setled upon all under the same Covenant, unless it be restrained to that some either by the nature and quality of the good it self, or by some expresse revelation of the will of God, but this good, viz. To have God a God to them and their infant seed, is by promise and prophesie given to, and setled upon some under the Covenant of Grace in new Testament times, and is not restrained to that some, either by the nature of the good it self, or by any expresse revelation of the will of God; therefore that good must needs by the same Prophesies and Promises be given to, and setled upon all under the same Covenant.

The Major proposition cannot be denied, without utterly razing the foundation of the faith and comfort of all believers. For what is the foundation of the faith and comfort of each particular Believer but this, That what good is promised to any particular Believers, and no wayes restrained to those in particular to whom the Promise was first made, is promised to all that are under the same Covenant with them:

and thus the Apostle directs us to apply Promises made to particular Believers, yea, when there might seem to be some shew of reason to restrain the good promised to those in particular to whom it was immediately made, the Apostle applying that Promise made to *Joshua* concerning *Gods never leaving nor forsaking him*, to the *Hebrews*, is our sufficient direction in this matter.

For the Minor proposition, that only can be questioned; for the proof of which I shall, the Lord assisting, do these three things.

First, Instance in, and assign the persons, who in new Testament times have by the Promises and Prophesies of the old Testament this good given to, and setled upon them.

Secondly, I shall prove, that 'tis one and the same Covenant of Grace that they are under, as having this good given unto them, and that believing Gentiles in general are under.

Thirdly, That this good is not restrained to them in particular, to whom it is by promise and prophesie given, either of those ways before mentioned, and consequently not at all

For the first. And thus I need do no more, but produce such old Testament Promises and Prophesies, as by which this good of having God a God to them and their Infant seed, is given to, and setled upon some under the Cove-

nant

name of Grace in new Testament times. The persons, or that sort or species of persons intended in them, is sufficiently evident from these *Promises* and *Prophecies* themselves. Look into these Scriptures, *Isai.* 59. 21. and 65. 25. and 44. 3, 4. *Jer.* 3. 12. *Ezek.* 37. 21. and 22. and compare all these places with *Rom.* 11. 26. That all these *Promises* and *Prophecies* refer to the Jews, as yet to be called and brought home unto Christ, will not be denyed by any. And this good, *viz.* To have God to be a God to them, and their Infant-seed with them, is given to, and setled upon them by these *Promises* and *Prophecies*, is sure past all rational doubt: If all these *Promises* and *Prophecies*, concerning Gods pouring his Spirit upon them and their Seed; concerning his continuing his Word and Spirit in their mouths, from one generation to another; concerning his being a God to all their families, not only of their persons, but families; concerning their Children being as aforetime, and the like; especially the Apostle expounding all these *Promises* and *Prophecies* by that universal phrase, *All Israel*, do not sufficiently assure the Jews, that when they are brought home unto Christ, they shall enjoy this good in the latitude and extent exprest, I see not how we can possibly be sure of any thing held forth by way of promise and prophecie, yea, or how we can be assur'd of any thing past, that is declar'd to us by Scripture-history. Certainly we must wholly despair of understanding any thing God speaks to us in his

Word; if we doubt whether the forementioned Promises and Prophesies do assure the Jews of that forementioned good. Therefore we may positively conclude, having such an abundant, yea, superabundant evidence from Scripture for it, that the Jews, when the veil is taken off from their hearts, and they that turned to to the Lord shall enjoy this good, in the same latitude and extent that their Father *Abraham* did.

Secondly, That it is one and the same Covenant into which the Jews (the persons to whom this good is by these Promises and Prophesies given) shall be received, and believing Gentiles in generations are under; this is evident, past all rational contradiction, by comparing *Jer.* 31, 31. with *Hebr.* 8 8. We plainly see, that the Apostle takes it for granted, that the Covenant that God promises to make with the Jews at their future calling and conversion, is the Covenant now made with believing Gentiles; so that though some, though groundlesly, suppose, that Covenant made with *Abraham* was not the same with that believing Gentiles are now under: yet none can pretend, that the Covenant under which believing Gentiles are, and that to be made with the Jews, at the time forementioned, are different or distinct Covenants. Suppose the Apostle tell us, that God made another Covenant with Believers than that he made with *Israel* of old (which that he made with *Abraham* it is no where said) yet they cannot

cannot ſay there is the leaſt intimation that God will make another Covenant with the Jews, different from that we are now under. Now then the Covenant being one and the ſame, the promiſes of that Covenant are indifferently to be applyed unto all under it: And for the further confirmation of this, let it be obſerved, that the Apoſtle doth frequently apply thoſe promiſes, which are to have their full accompliſhment to the Jews, to the Goſpel Church under this preſent adminiſtration: compare *Iſai.* 54. 1. with *Gal.* 4. 27. That promiſe in in the letter directly reſpects the Jews, yet the Apoſtle applyes it, as fulfilled inchoatively, in the converſion of the Gentiles: So compare *Hoſea* 1. 11. and 2. 23. with *Rom.* 9. 25, 26. So once again compare *Amos* 9. 11. with *Act* 15. 26. So that it is evident, that the Covenant, then to be made with, or into which the Jews ſhall be received, is the very ſame with that now made with believing Gentiles, and anſwerably thoſe promiſes, that ſhall have their full accompliſhment to the Jews, are applicable to believing Gentiles.

Thirdly, That this good, of having God a God to Parents and their Infant-ſeed, is not reſtrained to the Jews, by either of the ways before mentioned, and conſequently not at all: Who can imagine that believing Gentiles ſhould be leſs capable of injoying this good, than the Jews will be at their converſion? Why may not God be a God to Believers and their Seed now,

as well as to Believers and their Seed hereafter? Why may not God be a God to a believing Gentile and his Seed, as well as to a believing Jew and his Seed? Can any prove, that believing Gentiles are absolutely incapable of injoying this good, in the full latitude and extent of it? They will say something to the invalidating of this Argument: Suppose it should be granted (which yet I see no reason for) that the Seed of the Jews will be more capable of being the Subjects of the Covenant and promise thereof, than the Seed of Believers now are; yet unless they prove, that the Seed of Believers are absolutely uncapable of being received into, as joynt Subjects with their parents of the Covenant, and promise thereof, they say nothing to the purpose; in as much as whatever difference, in point of capability or incapability, may be assigned between the Seed of Believers then, and the Seed of Believers now, in regard of the different manner of this, and that administration, yet that is no reason why we may not apply these promises to believing Gentiles, to have their first accomplishment in and among them, according to the manner of this present administration, as well as the Jews may apply them to themselves, and injoy the accomplishment of them in a way suitable to that more excellent and glorious administration: and as for the other way of Gods restraining the good of promises to some particular person, viz. by the express revelation of his will, let any such revelation of the will of God, in the matter

under

under consideration, the produced, and it shall put an end to this controversie, and unless this good in the extent and latitude before stated, be some way restrained to the Jews, it may positively conclude, that the promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, is by the forementioned promises and prophesies confirmed to, and setled upon believing Gentiles, in the full latitude and extent in which it was given unto *Abraham*, *viz.* That God will be a God to them in their generations, that is, to them and their Seed. We may lay down this general rule, That whatever *Promises* or *Prophesies* are given out by the *Prophets* in the old Testament, directly referring and relating to the Jews at their call and conversion, yet unless the good contained in them be some way restrained to them in particular, we may and ought to apply them to the new Testament Church, and the particular members of it, under this present administration. The application made by the Apostle of *Promises* and *Prophesies* directly referring unto them, to the new Testament Church, and the particular Members thereof is a sufficient warrant for our so doing. As now for instance take that promise *Amos* 9. 11. concerning the building up the Tabernacle of *David*, in the letter of it, it hath a direct reference to the future conversion of the Jews, yet we see, *Acts* 15. 16. the Apostle applies it to the erecting and building up of the Gospel Church among the Gentiles. Now the Prophet *Jeremiah* tells us, how God will build up this Ta-

bernacle

bernacle of *David*, of and among the Jews, he will do it, by taking in their respective families, which must needs take in Parents and Children into Covenant with himself; *He will be a God to all the families of the house of Israel*. Now let any rational account be given, why we may not apply that promise in *Jeremiah*, expressing the manner of Gods raising up this tabernacle, to his raising it up from among the Gentiles, as well as the Apostle applyes that promise it self to the gathering the Church from among them; doubtless no reason, that hath so much as a probable shew of reason or truth in it, can be given.

And whereas it may be said, there are some things spoken in *Jeremiah* 31. which cannot be applied to believing Gentiles.

To that I answer, 'Tis granted: But that hinders not at all, but that what is applicable to them, may and ought to be applied unto them, in that promise, concerning the building up of the Tabernacle of *David*, as it refers to the conversion of the Jews, there is something which is not applicable to the Gentiles; yet that hinders not, but that the promise, so far as applicable to them, was intended of them, and accomplished in the beginning of it, in their conversion: So now God, as being the God of all the families of *Israel*, will, when the Jewish Church cometh up to the fulness of her glory, communicate himself in a more full, glorious, and universal manner, in respect of the individual Members of each family, than now he doth;

doth; yet that hinders not at all, but that that promise was intended of the families of *Israel*, as gathered from among the Gentiles, as the Apostle calls the Gentile Church, *the Israel of God*, and is begun to be accomplished, according to the true intent of it, under this present administration. But that's for the second way of evidencing the truth of this our second Proposition.

Thirdly, The truth of what we affirm in this second Proposition may be evidenced from the express letter of the new Testament, this promise made to *Abraham*, and that in the same extent and latitude in which it was made to him, is confirmed to, and setled upon believing Gentiles, by the express letter of the new Testament. Thus in *Galatians* 3. 13, 14. *Christ*, saith the Apostle, *hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us, that the blessing of* Abraham *might come on the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the Promise of the Spirit through faith.* The Apostle we see here doth positively affirm, that the very end of Christ, redeeming the Gentiles from the curse of the Law, was their possessing *Abraham*'s blessing, and consequently is the immediate issue and result of a Gentiles redemption or deliverance from the curse of the Law, through Christ, as believed in. No sooner is a believing Gentile freed from the curse of the Law, by his faith in Christ, but he, as one of *Abraham*'s Seed, hath *Abraham*'s blessing come upon him: For

the

the clearing up the evidence given in to the truth of our foregoing Proposition, by this Scripture, I shall do these two things.

First, I shall prove, that this blessing of *Abraham*, said to be come upon believing Gentiles, is that very good contained in that promise, wherein God ingaged himself to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed, and remove what Objections may be made to the contrary.

Secondly, I shall prove, that this blessing is come upon the Gentiles, through Christ, in the same latitude and extent that it was given to *Abraham*, at the first establishment of the Covenant with him.

For the first, *viz.* That this blessing came upon the Gentiles through Christ, is the good contained in the aforementioned promise? This is evident from the Context.

First, From verse 16. where saves the Apostle, *Now unto* Abraham *and his Seed were the Promises made; he said not, unto Seeds, as of many, but to thy Seed, which is Christ*: This verse 16. is added for the confirmation of what the Apostle had asserted in verse 14. For the clearing up of this we must observe, that by the promise of the Spirit, in the latter clause of that verse 14. and the blessing of *Abraham*, in the former clause of this verse, one and the same good is intended. 'Tis true *Beza* conceives two distinct

distinct blessings are intended, and therefore he adds that Copulative, καὶ, and takes that phrase, *The promise of the Spirit*, by an Hebraism, for the Spirit promised; but that cannot be, for then as *Pareus* observes, it should not have been, τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πνεύματος, the promise of the Spirit, as it is, but τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, the Spirit of promise: and therefore by the promise of the Spirit we must understand, either that spiritual promise, so *Pareus*, or rather that promise which God by his Spirit gave unto *Abraham*, and which by the inspiration of the Spirit is left upon record in the Scripture, and that is the promise containing the blessing before mentioned; or if any should understand it of the Spirit himself, taking it of his in-dwelling presence, they shall not be gainsaid by me. And the meaning is this, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, that we, whether Jews or Gentiles, might receive the promise of the Spirit, (*viz.* that blessing promised to *Abraham* by the Spirit) through faith in Christ, that is, that being united by faith unto Christ, and incorporated into him, as members of his mystical body, we might receive that blessing promised to *Abraham*, and now come upon the Gentiles through Christ. So that that which the Apostle aims at in this ver. 14. is this, that the blessing promised to *Abraham* is come upon the Gentiles, through their ingrafting into Christ by faith, and this the Apostle proves in vers. 15. by the tenour of the promise wherein the blessing before mentioned is contained. The tenour

nour of the promise is this, not, I will be a God to thee and thy Seeds, but to thee and thy Seed, as intending only one species or kind of Seed, which the Apostle expounds to be Christ, that is, Christ mystical. Now observe it, the Apostle urging the tenour of the promise, to prove that the blessing of *Abraham* is come upon the Gentiles, as he had above affirmed it to be, in verse 14. evidently declares, he must needs intend the blessing contained in that promise; if he had intended it of any other blessing than that good given to *Abraham* and his Seed by that promise, the tenour of that promise had not prov'd what he was to prove: so that it must needs be that blessing promised to *Abraham*, that the Apostle here affirms to be come upon believing Gentiles through Jesus Christ. Now that this promise, by the tenour of which the Apostle prov'd what he had said, verse 14. is this very promise made to *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. 7. is evident past all doubt, in as much as the Apostle must needs refer to some promise made to *Abraham* and his Seed in that very phrase, *To thee and thy Seed*; the strength of the Apostles Argument lying in the manner of expression, *to thy Seed*. Now we have no other promise containing a good competable to the Gentiles, expreſt in that phrase but this only; so that it is evident, that this blessing, said to be come upon the Gentiles through Christ, is that blessing contained in that very promise, wherein God ingaged to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations. As for that promise in *Gen.* 12. 3. there is no

mention

mention at all of *Abraham's* Seed; and so that *Gen.* 17. 19. unto which some seem to suppose the Apostle here hath reference, there is no mention at all of *Abraham's* Seed, as such, but of *Isaac's*; and besides, 'tis not said to thy Seed, but it is spoken of or concerning his Seed: But now, I say, the Apostle must needs refer to, and intend some promise, wherein this very phrase, *to thy Seed*, is expressly used: The strength of this Argument, as I have said, lying in the manner of expression, there being a mystery in that phrase, implying that the blessing of *Abraham* should not be enjoyed by all that might lay claim to this relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed, but by his Seed which were of the faith, as the Apostle explains it, *Rom.* 4. 13.

Secondly, That the blessing said to be come come upon the Gentiles through Christ, is that blessing contained in that promise of the Covenant, is evident from verse 29. where saith the Apostle, *If ye be Christs, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to promise*: Heirs of what? Why verse 14. tells us of the blessing of *Abraham*: But heirs according to what promise? Why verse 16. tells us, that promise made to the Seed of *Abraham*: Now how could they be heirs of that blessing, according to, or by vertue of that promise, unless the blessing they were heirs unto, were the blessing or good contained in that promise? Can any be heirs to a blessing, according to or by vertue of that promise, in which that blessing is not contained?

Or

Or can a promise convey a right to that good which is not contained in it? who can imagine it? Therefore doubtless the blessing must needs be the blessing, contained in that promise made to *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations.

Thirdly, That the blessing of *Abraham* said to be come upon believing Gentiles through Christ, is the blessing contained in that promise, is evident from verse 9, where it is said, they that are of the faith are blessed, σὺν τῷ πιστῷ, with faithful *Abraham*, that is, blessed with the same blessing that *Abraham* was blessed with: Now there is no blessing that *Abraham* was blessed with, that can possibly come upon the Gentiles, but only the blessing contained in this promise, and therefore that must needs be the blessing here intended.

But three things will be objected against our taking this Scripture as an express ascertainment of *Abraham's* blessing, as it consisted in that promise, of God being a God to him and his Seed, upon believing Gentiles.

1. First, It will be objected, That this blessing is not meant of that blessing with which *Abraham* himself was blessed, but of that blessing promised to him, with reference to his Seed, which was, that God would be a God to them, as he was to *Abraham* himself.

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To this I anſwer; It is all one, whether we underſtand it of the bleſſing promiſed to *Abraham* with reference to himſelf or with reference to his Seed, in as much as the Promiſe made to *Abraham* himſelf, and that made to him with reference to his Seed, is one and the ſame: What God promiſed to *Abraham*, *viz.* That he would be a God to him and his natural Seed, that he promiſed to his Seed, *viz.* to be a God to them in their generations, that is, as before explained, to them and their Seed; and beſides, making it ſo, the promiſe to *Abraham*'s natural Seed was to them in their generations. And in like manner, as the Apoſtle here affirms, it runs to believing Gentiles, *viz.* to them in their generations, including Parents and Children: But if we compare this phraſe, ἡ εὐλογία τῦ Ἀβραὰμ, the bleſſing of *Abraham*, with verſe 9. it is evident, it was the bleſſing wherewith *Abraham* himſelf was bleſſed; the bleſſing of *Abraham*, according to the propriety of the phraſe, properly ſignifies the bleſſing that *Abraham* himſelf injoyed, and to be bleſſed with *Abraham*, to enjoy his bleſſing, and to inherit the good promiſed to him, with reference to his Seed, intends, in the language and diſputation of the Apoſtle, one and the ſame thing; an undeniable evidence, that the promiſe as made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, contained the very ſame good it contained as made to *Abraham* himſelf, the Father of that Seed. Now to him it was, to him and his Seed, that is, his natural Seed; and therefore it is the ſame to his Seed,

to them and their natural Seed, or which is all one, to them in their generations.

Secondly, It will be objected, That this blessing is not meant of a relative good, consisting in a Covenant-relation between God and *Abraham*, and his Seed, but is meant of those spiritual blessings of Reconciliation, Justification, Adoption, and Eternal Life vouchsafed to *Abraham*, as personally considered; and 'tis granted, that *Abraham*'s blessing, consisting of these spiritual blessings, is come upon believing Gentiles, through Christ: But what is this to that promise made to *Abraham*, concerning Gods being a God to him, and his Seed in their generations, constituting an external Covenant-relation between God and them.

To this I answer, This Objection will be obviated by the second thing proposed, for the clearing up of the settlement made of *Abraham*'s blessing upon believing Gentiles, by the express letter of this Scripture: and therefore I shall only say thus much at present, that it is granted, the spiritual benefits or blessings now mentioned, were included in this blessing, said here to be come upon the Gentiles through Christ, yet not exclusive of that relative good of a Covenant state and relation between God and *Abraham*, and his Seed, but that is the first and primary good intended, and that which is the foundation of all the rest, and in which they are all vertually included.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It will be further objected, That the blessing here said to be come upon the Gentiles through Christ, is not that blessing wherewith *Abraham* himself was blessed, but that blessing promised to the Nations in him, and consequently the Apostle intends not the blessing contained in that promise of the Covenant, mentioned in that *Gen.* 17. 7 but that blessing spoken of *Gen.* 12. 3. where God Promises unto *Abraham*, that *in him all the Nations of the earth should be blessed*: and that the Apostle intends it of that blessing contained in that promise, and not of that blessing contained in that *Gen.* 17. appears from verse the eighth of this third of *Galatians*.

To this I answer two things.

First, That though I freely grant, that this blessing, said by our Apostle to be come upon the Gentiles, be that blessing with which 'twas promised to *Abraham*, That the Nations should be blessed in him, yet it will not follow, that it is not the blessing or good contained in that grand promise of the Covenant, yea, that it is the blessing contained in that grand promise of the Covenant, is abundantly proved from what hath been already spoken. And therefore,

Secondly, I answer, That that blessing, with which God promised to bless the Nations in *Abraham*, is the same blessing contained in that grand promise of the Covenant; and therefore

the Apostle might have, and certainly hath reference to both these promises in this Chapter. For the clearing up of this, let it be observed, that there are three things considerable in this blessing promised to *Abraham*, with reference to the Nations of the Earth.

First, There is the matter of this blessing, and that is summarily, their having and enjoying God, as a God unto them and theirs.

Secondly, There are the means of their injoying that blessing, and these are either chief and principal, *viz.* Christ as removing the curse of the Law, and purchasing that blessing for them by his death and suffering. 2. The subordinate and less principal, *viz.* *Abraham* himself.

Thirdly, There is the notion or consideration under which they should receive and injoy this blessing, and that is, as *Abraham*'s Seed.

Now in that *Gen.* 12. 3. we have a more general promise of this blessing, with which God intended to bless the Nations, and also specification of the means, both supream and principal, and also subordinate and less principal, of their coming to the injoyment of it; they should be blessed in *Abraham*, that is, in *Abraham* himself, as the less principal means, in Christ, the Seed of *Abraham*, as the chief and principal means.

But

But in this *Genesis* we have both the matter of the blessing also promised, and the notion under which they should receive and enjoy it. *I will be*, saith God, *a God to thee and thy Seed after thee in their generations*. The notion under which God promiseth to bless the Nations in *Abraham* is, as they were his Seed; the matter of the blessing is, that *God would be a God to them in their generations*; that is, to him and his. So that these two Promises, *Gen.* 12. 3. and *Gen.* 17. 7. are not two distinct Promises, containing two distinct blessings, but they contain one and the same blessing, and as taken jointly together, declare the full mind of God concerning his blessing the Nations of the Earth in *Abraham*. The sum of all comes to thus much, That God would make *Abraham* as a Father of natural Children, from among whom the Messiah should come; so a spiritual or mystical Father, and answerably would, through the interposal of that one principal Member of his Seed, *viz.* Christ, be a God to him and his Seed, both natural and mystical, in their generations; and consequently all the Nations of the Earth, whether of *Abraham*'s natural Race or Posterity, out of the Gentiles, that were designed to be blessed, should be blessed in *Abraham*, as his Seed, or in him, as a common Father to them all; *and in his Seed*, that is, Christ, as the procuring cause of that their blessedness: hence it is no wonder, though the Apostle, in speaking of the way of the blessings coming upon the Gentiles, hath reference to both these

promises, both, as I said, taken together, and in conjunction one with the other, containing the full mind of God, concerning his blessing the world? As a close of all let me add, that as God promised to bless the Nations in *Abraham*, as before opened, so he made *Abraham* himself a copy or pattern, according unto which he promised to bless them in him, and that both in respect of the blessing it self, with which he would bless them, and in respect of the terms and manner of their possessing and inheriting that blessing, *viz.* Through faith in Christ, expressing it self in universal obedience.

For the further proof of this, let it be observed, that both the Hebrew prefix and the Greek preposition we translate in, may be translated after the manner, or according to: For the Greek, see *Hebr.* 4. 11. whence *Calvin* gives the sense thus, *Non tantum significat ipsum fore exemplar, sed eundem benedictionis*. *Junius* and *Tremellius* give this gloss, *Familiæ terræ tibi instar per fidem, participes fiunt harum promissionum beneficiorumque earum*: And thus the Apostle expounds this promise, of being blessed in *Abraham*, by another phrase, blessed with *Abraham*. Now then having proved, that this blessing, said by the Apostle to be come upon the Gentiles through Christ, is that very blessing or good contained in that grand Promise of the Covenant, and that not only in that branch of it that refers to *Abraham*'s Seed, but in that branch referring directly unto *Abraham* himself, wherein God ingaged to be a God to him

and

and his Seed, and consequently that this is the blessing said to be come upon the Gentiles.

I come now to the second thing proposed, *viz.* to prove, that this blessing is come upon the Gentiles, in the same extent and latitude in which it was given to *Abraham* himself. Now this is sufficiently evident from the aforecondideration of the indefiniteness and universality of the expression, the blessing of *Abraham*; we see the Apostle affirms, the blessing of *Abraham* is come upon the Gentiles, without any restriction or limitation, he doth not say this or that part of the blessing, but the blessing absolutely and unlimitedly.

It is true, notwithstanding the indefiniteness and universality of the Apostles expression; yet in case any part of the blessing vouchsafed to *Abraham* be of that nature, as that the Gentiles are simply and absolutely incapable of it, or in case God himself hath any where else withheld any part of it from them, in this case a limitation and restriction must be understood, as necessarily implied in this general and universal expression; but otherwise we ought to understand the Apostle, according to the full latitude of his expression, the blessing, that is, the whole blessing of *Abraham* is come upon believing Gentiles.

And hence we argue; If the whole blessing of *Abraham* be come upon believing Gentiles, so far as they are capable of injoying it, and God hath by no express revelation of his will with-held

held it from them, and this, to have God a God to him and his natural Seed, was an essential part of his blessing, which believing Gentiles are capable of injoying, and God hath not by any revelation of his will withheld from them, then this part of his blessing is come upon them in the same extent and latitude in which it was given to *Abraham*: But the former is true, therefore the latter.

It's true, If any man can make it appear, that this part of *Abraham*'s blessing, *viz.* Gods ingaging to be a God to his Seed with him, be a blessing the Gentiles are incapable of injoying, or that God by any express revelation of his will, hath withheld that part of the Blessing from them, we shall cease any further claim to it.

But as for the first, The incapacity of believing Gentiles to injoy this part of *Abraham*'s blessing, sure none can pretend it; for suppose it should be granted (which is not) that believers under this present dispensation are not in a like capacity to injoy this good, that Saints in future times will be; or that their Seed are not alike capable of that good the Seed of Believers in those times will be capable of: Yet none can say, that either believers, or their Seed, are incapable of what *Abraham* and his natural Seed were capable of: 'tis strange how it is possible for any man to conceit such a difference, either in the capacity of Parents or Children, or in the dispensation of God, that Believers under this present dispensation should be wholly

ly deprived of that part of the blessing, which Believers formerly injoyed, and shall again injoy at the call and conversion of the Jews: And for the latter, but any revelation of the will of God be produced, whereby he hath withheld this part of the blessing from Believers, and the controversie is at an end. Till then we shall take it for granted, that the blessing of *Abraham* is in this extent and latitude, in and by Christ come upon believing Gentiles. And though it is granted, the direct design of the Apostle in this place is, not to assert the latitude and extent of *Abraham*'s blessing, yet the indefiniteness and universality of his expression is a sufficient warrant for our interpreting the blessing in this latitude and extent pleaded for.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The fourth and last way of the second subordinate Proposition confirmation presented. Where several passages in the New Testament are considered. Five Conclusions deduced from them; The third principally insisted upon; Where it is proved, that the Promise of Salvation appertains to the Houses of believing Parents, as such without consideration had to the personal Faith and Repentance of any in or of their Houses, besides their own, by two Arguments. Objections against each Argument answered.

FOurthly, The truth of what we affirm in this second Proposition may be further evidenced from several passages and expressions in the new Testament, plainly declaring, that the Infant-seed of Believers under the Gospel administration, are included and taken in, as joynt Subjects with their Parents of the Covenant and Promise thereof, and that by vertue of their Parents relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed.

Now

Now this last way of evidencing what is pleaded for, though it might require a very large discourse, yet I shall but briefly touch upon it, partly because the truth pleaded for is, as I conceive, sufficiently evidenced from what hath been already spoken, and partly because others have already fully handled and improved these passages and expressions, I have reference unto, for the vindicating and establishing this truth, I in common with them contend for; that to add any thing more, especially there being so little, or rather nothing at all, replyed to any purpose by our Opposers, may seem wholly superfluous; and therefore I shall only produce those passages and expressions in the new Testament, and shew what evidence they give into this second Proposition, in several Conclusions, necessarily flowing from, or grounded upon them, as taken together, and compared one with another.

The Passages and Expressions I have reference unto, are these five.

The first is that of Christ, *Mark* 10. 10.

The second is again that of Christ, *Luke* 19. 9.

The third is that of *Peter* to the trembling Jews, *Acts* 2. 38, 39.

The fourth is that of *Paul* to the Jaylor, *Acts* 16. 31.

The last is that of *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* 7. 14.

From all these Scriptures, as laid together, and compared one with another, these five Conclusions do necessarily follow.

First, That upon Parents believing in Christ, the Promise of salvation belongs not only to themselves, but to their respective Houses; saies the Apostle to the Jaylor, *Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, and thine House*: where we see the Apostle proposes this as a motive and incouragement to him to believe, in that upon his believing, not only himself, but his house should be saved, that is, both he himself and his house should come under the promise of salvation; or as the Apostle Peter expounds it, *The promise of salvation should be to him and his house*; he and his house should have salvation setled upon them by promise, according to the true tenour of the promise, which as it did not secure salvation to the Jaylor himself absolutely, but upon condition of his perseverance in faith and obedience; *He that endureth to the end shall be saved: Be faithful unto the death, and I will give thee a Crown of life*, saith Christ to that Church, *Rev.* 2. 10. from which and the like Scripture it appears, that the promise of salvation, that Believers themselves are under, is not absolute but conditional; and the same must be understood of the promises, as made to their houses, which through their Parents believing, they are brought under.

And as the Apostle promises salvation to the Jaylor and his house, as a motive and incouragement to him to believe, so Christ tells *Zacheus*, that upon his believing salvation was come to his house, that is, he and his house were now under the promise of salvation.

As

As for that conceit of some, that by Salvation here Christ himself should be intended, as it is wholly groundless, so an evident perverting of the words of Christ.

For first, Let it be shewed where Christ is ever called Salvation simply and absolutely: It is true, he is called Gods salvation, and Believers have appropriated him to themselves as their salvation, but that is as he is Author or Efficient of Salvation: This term *Salvation*, when used simply and absolutely, signifies Salvation properly and literally taken.

Secondly, It is evident, that Salvation here is said to be come to *Zacheus* his house, as a peculiar good accrewing to him upon that very ground, and vouchsafed to him for that very reason, because he was now a Son of *Abraham*, and consequently was a good common to all, of whom the same ground and reason might be predicated or spoken, and peculiar and proper to them as such. Now as Christ did not come to all their houses, who were the Children of *Abraham*, whether natural or mystical, so he might come to their houses, who were not the Sons of *Abraham*, in the one or the other sence.

Thirdly, The Apostle doth clearly expound the meaning of Christ, *Salvation was come to his house*, that is, as the Apostle expounds it, He and his house were under the promise of Salvation. Now did not men too wilfully shut their

eyes against the light of Scripture, they would not affix a sence upon the words of Christ, no where warranted from any other parallel Scripture, but contrary to the design of Christ in them, when they have a plain Exposition made by the Holy Ghost himself: we see what Christ saith of *Zacheus*'s house, and the Apostle promises the Jaylor, with reference to his house, that is said and promised upon one and the same ground, *viz.* the Father of both: Christ saith, *Salvation is come to his house*; he now believing, the Apostle saith, his house shall be saved upon condition of his believing. And who can imagine, but that they both speak of salvation in one and the same sence, and consequently that the Apostle expounds what that salvation was, that Christ saith was come to *Zacheus*, upon his believing, 'twas the same kind of salvation that he promises to the Jaylor, upon condition of his believing.

The second Conclusion. Thus under this term *House*, Children are, in a peculiar and special manner, included and comprehended: How far this term *House*, is to be extended, whether beyond the Children of those, whose house is spoken of, or no, concerns not my present purpose; that they are included and intended under that term *House*, is all that at present I affirm. Now that the Children are intended, is evident, partly from that phrase, *Acts* 16. 33. where οἰκίας σοῦ, thy house, verse 31. is expounded by this phrase, οἱ αὐτοῦ πάντες, all of him,

him, and partly from the frequent acceptation of this term *House* throughout the Scripture; it being peculiarly appropriated to the Children: Or should the term be more comprehensive, yet it cannot rationally be supposed to exclude them: And yet 'tis further evident by the Apostle *Peter*, where saith he, *The Promise is to you and your Children*: What Promise? Why the Apostle *Paul* tells us, the promise of Salvation; *The Promise is to thee and thy house*, saith *Paul* to the Jaylor. But who are we to understand by *House*? Why *Peter* tells us, his Children. Hence again, as for that conceit of others, that the meaning should be, that salvation was come only to him, and in that it was come to him, it might be said, it was come to his house; 'tis too palpable a perverting the mind of Christ: For let it be observed, that by Salvation here, is meant Salvation in a proper sence, as hath been already proved; and that by *House* here, cannot be meant that material building wherein he dwelt, but his Houshold or Family. Now how Salvation could be said to be come to his Houshold, in that it was come to him, when as his Houshold was no wayes interested or concerned in it, is hard to imagine; properly it could not be said to be come to his house, himself was not properly his house: So that this interpretation must needs suppose, that Christ here speaks figuratively. Now let it be observed, how utterly improbable it is, that Christ should use a figurative speech, that had a direct tendency to lead men into a mistake about

his

his sense and real meaning, when he might have expressed himself without any figure, in as few and as intelligible words, and thereby prevented the danger of his being mistaken: Had Christ intended that Salvation was come only to Zacheus himself, it had been as easie for him to have said, Salvation is come to this man, as to say, Salvation is come to this house, and that this phrase, *this house*, did subject men to the danger of mistaking his sence and meaning, in case he had spoken figuratively, is sufficiently evident, because that term *House*, is so frequently, yea, constantly and universally used in a sence different from what this interpretation supposeth that Christ did use it in this place, that term *House*, being constantly and universally used to signifie the Family or Children of those, whose house is spoken of, unless when it signifies the material building it self: How many hundred places might be instanced in, as an evidence of this? Let it be shewed wheresoever this term *House* is used as it is supposed to be in this interpretation: neither is it, as I judge, a phrase to be paralleld in any Language whatsoever, that any good or evil should be said to be come to a house that is, the Family or Houshold, when it is come only to one in the house, having no reference to any beyond the particular person himself, is an expression not to be paralleld throughout the whole Scriptures; but now 'tis the constant phrase of Scripture, to express the Family, especially the Children, by that term *House*: 'tis wholly superfluous to enumerate places, to

that

that should this term *House* be used thus improperly by Christ in this place; it must needs subject all men to the danger of mistaking his sence and meaning, and the danger must needs be the greater, because the good, *viz.* Salvation, said here to be come to his house, is so frequently, both in the old and new Testament, held forth, at least very probably, to say no more at present, in such an extent and latitude as to reach the whole Family, especially the Children together with their Parents; thus it was promised to *Abraham*, that *the Families of the Earth should be blessed in him*: So God promises, that he would be the God of all the Families of *Israel*. *Paul* tells the Jaylor, that he and his house should be saved. *Peter* tells his awakened hearers, the promise was to them and their Children, that is, in an equivalency to them and their houses. Now when it is found in such variety of passages, that the promise of Salvation extends to whole houses upon the believing of the Parents, men must needs be very apt to conceive, that Christ uses this term *House*, in a sence correspondent to those various passages, wherein the same good is at least probably held forth in such a latitude and extent, as to reach the whole houses of believing Parents. Now I say, can we imagine that Christ should use a phrase in such a sence, as the whole Scripture is unacquainted with, and which is constantly used in another sence, and thereby subject all men to so great danger of mistaking his sence and meaning, and that also to the upholding of

what himself; according to the judgment of our Opposers, he was about to throw down, when he might have expreſt himself with as much eaſe, & alike intelligibly, in proper terms, no way liable to be miſtaken, methinks it is very ſtrange how it is poſſible for any man to imagine it: So that doubtleſs Chriſt ſpeaks properly; *Salvation was come to Zacheus* his houſe, that is, the promiſe of Salvation did belong to his houſe, in ſpecial to his Children: and this agrees, as already obſerved, with that promiſe of *Paul* to the Jaylor, *Thou ſhalt be ſaved and thy houſe.*

Thirdly, That the promiſe of Salvation belongs to the houſes of believing Parents, meerly as ſuch, without conſideration had to the perſonal faith and repentance of any in, or of their reſpective houſes, and conſequently the promiſe of Salvation may, and frequently doth belong to the houſes of believing Parents, antecedent to the perſonal faith and repentance of any in or of their houſes, beſides themſelves. What belongs to the houſes of believing Parents, as ſuch, that is, as the houſes of ſuch Parents, equally and alike belongs to all the houſes of all ſuch Parents, and conſequently may belong to the houſes of this or that particular believing Parent, when yet none in or of the houſe have perſonally believed or repented.

Now the truth of this Concluſion will be evident by a twofold Argument.

First,

First, what belongs to the houſes of believing Parents, meerly by vertue of ſomething univerſally predicable of all ſuch Parents, muſt needs belong to their reſpective houſes, as ſuch, without conſideration had to the perſonal faith and repentance of any in or of their reſpective houſes: But the promiſe of Salvation belongs to the houſes of believing Parents, by vertue of ſomething univerſally predicable of all ſuch Parents; and therefore the promiſe of Salvation muſt needs belong to all their reſpective houſes, as the houſes of ſuch Parents, without conſideration had to the perſonal faith and repentance of any in or of this houſe.

The Major propoſition cannot be denyed; for if the promiſe of Salvation belong to the houſes of believing Parents, meerly by vertue of ſomething univerſally predicable of all ſuch Parents, certainly then none can queſtion, but that the promiſe belongs to thoſe houſes, as the houſes of ſuch Parents, without conſideration had to any thing in, or done by the houſes themſelves, or any in or of them. If freedom in ſuch a Town or Corporation ſhall belong to the Children of Free-men, meerly by vertue of their Parents freedom, ſure none could queſtion, but that freedom did belong to them, as the Children of ſuch Parents, without conſideration had to any thing in reſpect of the Children themſelves.

For the Minor propoſition; and thus I have three things to do,

First, To shew what is that thing predicable of believing Parents, by vertue of which the promise of Salvation belongs to their respective houses.

Secondly, To prove, that the promise of Salvation doth indeed belong to the houses of such Parents, meerly by vertue of that thing predicable of them.

Thirdly, To prove, that that thing, whatever it be, is universally predicable, or is universally true of all such Parents.

For the first, And thus in brief, That thing predicable of believing Parents, by vertue of which the promise of Salvation belongs to their respective houses, is their relation unto *Abraham*, as his Seed: Therefore saith Christ of *Zacheus* his house, *This day is Salvation come to this house, for as much as he is the Son of Abraham*: 'Tis his Sonship to *Abraham*, or his relation to *Abraham*, as one of his Seed, that interested his house in the promise of Salvation.

Secondly, Which is the main thing to be proved, That the promise of Salvation doth belong to the houses of believing Parents, meerly by vertue of their Parents relation unto *Abraham*, as his Seed. Now this is evident from that passage of Christ concerning *Zacheus* his house, *Salvation is come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a Son of Abraham*; that by *house* is

not

not meant *Zacheus* himself, is before proved; it muſt needs be meant of his Houſhold, or Family, peculiarly intending his Children. Now ſayes Chriſt, *Salvation is come to this houſe*, that is, to this Houſhold or Family, *for as much as he is a Son of Abraham.* Whether *Zacheus* was a Jew or a Roman is all one as to my purpoſe, ſeeing he is conſidered here not as a natural, but as a myſtical Son of *Abraham*; and as ſuch a one, Chriſt affirms, Salvation was come to his houſe; plainly grounding his houſes right to, and intereſt in Salvation, upon his own relation to *Abraham*, as one of his Seed: Salvation was not only to himſelf, but to his houſhold, by vertue of his relation to *Abraham*, as one of his Seed, and that the promiſe of Salvation belongs to the houſes of ſuch Parents, meerly by vertue of that their relation to *Abraham*, is evident, becauſe the Scripture aſſigns nothing elſe as neceſſarily to concur with that their Parents relation unto *Abraham*, for the effecting or producing their houſes right to, and intereſt in the promiſe: Chriſt tells us here; That Salvation was come to this mans houſe by vertue of his relation unto *Abraham*; and let it be ſhewed, where any thing elſe is required, for the effecting or producing that their intereſt in; and right to the promiſe.

It may be ſome will ſay, 'Tis eaſily done; the Apoſtle *Peter* makes effectual calling a neceſſary prerequiſite to the Seed of believing Parents intereſt in, and right to the promiſes: for ſaith

he, *The Promiſe is to you and your Children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God ſhall call.* Whence it ſeems to be evident, that notwithſtanding Parents relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed, yet the promiſe of Salvation appertains not to their Children, but upon ſuppoſition of their being effectually called.

To that I anſwer two things (not to ſtay upon a vindication of that Text of the Apoſtle from the unſound ſence ſuppoſed in this Objection,

First, That Chriſt doth not ſay, Salvation ſhall come to this houſe, but he ſpeaks in the time paſt, Salvation is come: 'tis true, if it had been only a promiſe referring to the time to come, there had been ſome ſhew of colour for the ſuppoſing ſuch a condition to be implyed in it; but Chriſt ſaith, Salvation was then come, and that upon that ground, and for that reaſon, becauſe he alſo was a Son of *Abraham*. Now ſhould we interpret this affirmation of Chriſt by that of the Apoſtle, according to the ſence given by our Oppoſers, his words would run thus, Salvation is come to this houſe, that is, to as many of them as the Lord our God ſhall call, which would be contradictory, for if it were come already, the coming of it could not depend upon a future condition. If the coming of Salvation did depend upon the performance of a future condition, it could not be ſaid to be come already; and therefore we muſt not interpret

this

this paſſage of Chriſt by that of *Peter*, but that paſſage of *Peter* by that of Chriſt.

Secondly, I anſwer, That this was a good vouchſafed to *Zacheus*, upon the account of his relation to *Abraham*, as one of his Seed, and anſwerably was a good common to all ſtanding alike related to *Abraham*, and proper and peculiar unto them; but now to have the promiſe of Salvation upon condition of being effectually called, is a good common to all men univerſally, and therefore the promiſe is ſaid to be to all whom the Lord our God ſhall call; but Salvation was come to *Zacheus* his houſe as he was a Son of *Abraham*; ſo that we ſee it was meerly by vertue of his relation unto *Abraham*, that the promiſe of Salvation belongs to his houſe, Chriſt affirming, that Salvation was come by vertue of that his relation; and the Scripture being ſilent as to the neceſſary concurrence of anything elſe for the intereſting his houſe in the promiſe of Salvation; we may poſitively conclude, the promiſe of Salvation doth belong to the houſes of all believing Parents, meerly by vertue of that their relation to *Abraham* as his Seed, eſpecially if we conſider,

Thirdly, That this relation to *Abraham* is univerſally predicable of all believing Parents: All believing Parents are the Children of *Abraham*, and conſequently this could be no privilege peculiar to *Zacheus*, to have Salvation come

to his houſes, as he was a Son of *Abraham*, but is a priviledge common to all believing Parents, they ſtanding alike related to *Abraham* as he did. So that the Minor Propoſition is undoubtedly true, whence the Concluſion will undoubtedly follow.

My ſecond Argument is this, If the promiſe of Salvation may and ought to be applied by the diſpencers of the Goſpel to believing Parents, both with reference to themſelves and their Children, meerly as ſuch, that is, as believing Parents, without conſideration had to the perſonal faith and repentance of any in or of their houſes, then the promiſe of Salvation muſt needs belong to them and their houſes, without conſideration had to the perſonal faith and repentance of any in or of their houſes: but the former is true, therefore the latter.

Certainly if a Miniſter of the Goſpel may apply the promiſe of Salvation, not only to believing Parents themſelves, but to their houſes, then that promiſe belongs not only to them, but to their houſes: Miniſters may not apply promiſes any other wayes then as they belong to thoſe to whom the application is made.

Now that the promiſe of Salvation may and ought to be applyed in this extent and latitude, not only to believing Parents themſelves, but to their reſpective houſes, and that meerly as ſuch, without conſideration had to the perſonal faith and repentance of any in or of their houſes, is evident, paſt all rational contradiction, by the

Apoſtles

Apostles proposing the promise in this extent and latitude to the Jaylor. As the Apostle did propose it to the Jaylor, as a motive to him to believe, it might and ought to have been applied to him upon his actual believing, he might have been assured, that now he and his house should be saved, yet in that way, and according to that method, or upon the terms held forth in the Covenant of Grace (an account of which we have already given.) And that the Apostle proposes this promise in the extent and latitude before exprest to the Jaylor, upon condition of his own believing, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of his house, is evident from the express words of the Text, *Thou shalt be saved and thy house*; and consequently might have been applied to him, as a Believer, upon his actual believing; and hence it appears, that this promise did not appertain to him alone, it was not a priviledge peculiar to him, to have his house under the same promise with himself, but a priviledge common to all believing Parents. *Quatenus ipsum, concludes de omni.*

The only Objection I have met with is this; That as the Promise was made conditionally to the Jaylor himself, so to his house, that is, as the Apostle promised to him, that if he believed he should be saved; so he promised to him, with reference to his house, that if they believed they should be saved, according to the interpretation given of that promise of *Peter*, *Acts* 2. 39.

To

To that I answer, That though it is readily granted, that the promise, as externally proposed, was conditionall both to himself, and his house, yet I say, that his own believing did give his house an actual right to, and interest in the promise (yet to be fulfilled, according to the terms of the Covenant) is evident, because there could be no reason of the Apostles adding that other branch of the promise as a motive to him to believe, unless by his believing a peculiar good (which can be nothing else but this right to, and interest in the promise) did accrew to his house. It had been a stronger motive for the Apostle to have said, Believe in the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved, and all the Town, or Country, yea, all the World. If the Apostle had not intended a peculiar good, in relation to the salvation of his house, redounding to them by his believing, there had been no more reason for him to mention his house, than for him to have mentioned the whole Town or Country, or whole World, in as much as they should all be saved upon condition of their believing.

And hence, whereas when this consideration is urged to prove, That the Apostle *Peter* holds forth and declares the Covenant, and promises thereof, in this latitude and extent, to those awakened Jews, *Acts* 2. 29.

It is replyed, That there were other Reasons of his mentioning their Children, then the asserting their right to, and interest in the Covenant and Promise thereof. That shift (for so I shall call it) can have no place here, for if it

should

should be granted, that the Apostle *Peter* might mention the Children of these Jews, with respect to that imprecation they were under, recorded in *Matth.* 27, 25. or with respect to that first offer and tender of Christ and the grace of the Gospel to be made to the Jews; yet there could be no such reason of the Apostle mentioning the Jaylors house, they were under no such imprecation, neither had they any priviledge above others, in point of the offers and tenders of Salvation to be made to them; and therefore the only reason imaginable of the Apostles mentioning of his house, was to assure him, that upon his believing he should injoy the promise of Salvation, in the extent and latitude it was at the first establishment of the Covenant given unto *Abraham*: had not the promise extended to his house, as well as to himself, personally considered, there had been no reason for the Apostle to mention his house, and tell him, that not only himself, but his house should be saved, had not a peculiar good redounded to his house by his believing: It had been a more effectual motive to have told him, that the whole Town should have been saved in as much as then his house had been included, and he had had a further intimation of the probability of other of his Friends, Relations and Acquaintance Salvation.

Secondly, I answer, If we compare this promise of *Paul* to the Jaylor, with that forementioned passage of Christ concerning *Zacheus*

cheus his houſe, 'tis evident, the Apoſtle propoundeth this promiſe, in both branches of it, to him, upon the alone condition of his perſonal believing; and his meaning is, that in caſe he himſelf ſhould believe, he and his houſe ſhould be ſaved, that is, as *Peter* (as hath been already obſerved) expounds it, the promiſe of Salvation would be to him and his houſe; and that this is his meaning, appears from that parallel paſſage of Chriſt: Chriſt tells *Zacheus*, *Salvation was come to his houſe*, upon his own believing, and that upon that very ground, or for that very reaſon, becauſe he now was a Son of *Abraham*, and upon the ſame ground, and for the ſame reaſon, we muſt ſuppoſe that the Apoſtle makes this promiſe to the Jaylor; the Apoſtle is to be underſtood, according to that of Chriſt, it is as if he had ſaid, believe in the Lord Jeſus, and thereby thou wilt become a Son of *Abraham*, and as ſo related to him, ſhall enjoy the promiſes in the ſame extent and latitude in which it was made to him at the firſt eſtabliſhment of it. God will be a God to thee and thy houſe, that is eminently thy Children, which is all one as to the ſence and importance of that promiſe, Salvation ſhall come to thee and thy houſe, or, The promiſe will be to thee and thy Children: all theſe phraſes are of one and the ſame importance and ſignification. So that from all, the truth of this our third Concluſion evidently appears, and from it, before I proceed to the other, we may infer theſe two things.

First,

First, That it is not at all necessary to affirm or prove, that there were any Infants in the Jaylors house at this time, in order to the proving, from the Apostles making this conditional promise to him and his house; that the promises of the Covenant are given to, and setled upon believing Gentiles, in the same latitude and extent that they were given to *Abraham*, at the first establishment of the Covenant with him; if he had any Infants, the promise had belonged to them as part of his house; the promise was to him, with reference to his house, as a Believer, without consideration had to the personal faith and repentance of any in or of his house; hence whoever was to be included in this term *house*, had the promise appertaining to them, whether capable of believing or repenting or no, and consequently had appertained to his Infants, in case he had had any, they being necessarily to be included in this term *house*; and suppose there was no Infants in his house at that time, yet in that this was a promise, not peculiar and proper to him, but common to all Believers, the promise belongs to the Infants in their respective houses. The promise appertains to the house, by vertue of the Parents believing, as thereby they are ingrafted into *Abraham*'s Family, and become one of his Seed; and hence all that are included in that term *house*, have the promise appertaining unto them, and consequently Infants as well as others.

And

And if it should be said, There might be some Children grown up, who might refuse to accept of the promise, as made upon the terms of the Gospel, and how could the promise appertain to them.

I answer, Their case would have been the very same with the case of the Jews, at the first preaching of the Gospel. The promise appertain'd to them, as of the houses of believing Parents, but their actual refusal would have, *ipso facto*, disanulled that their right and title to the promise, and so they, by their own sin, had deprived themselves of the good promised.

Secondly, We may infer, that the Scripture frequently mentioning the personal faith and repentance of the houses, or of any in the houses of believing Parents, no way opposes, but on the other hand strongly confirms the truth of what we affirm in this second Proposition, concerning the settlement of *Abraham*'s promise, in the full latitude and extent of it, upon believing Gentiles, in that the houses, or any in the houses of believing Parents, were savingly wrought upon, either at the same time, or immediately after their Parents believing and accepting the terms of the Covenant, it cannot be with the least shew of reason inferred or concluded from thence, that they had not the promise of Salvation appertaining to them, meerly as the houses, or as of the houses of such Parents,

without

without consideration had to their own personal faith and repentance; but on the other hand it doth strongly prove, they were under the promise, as the houses of such *Parents*, in their believing and repenting the Promise was verified; their believing and repenting was a visible demonstration, that the promise, in the extent and latitude before expreſt, *viz.* as reaching and taking in the houses with the *Parents* themselves, was duly and rightfully applyed to such *Parents* by the Apostle, when we find the Apostle applyes the promises of the Covenant to the Gentiles, in the same latitude and extent that they were given to *Abraham*, *viz.* as taking in their Children with them, and then read of the faith and repentance of their Children, immediately following upon their own believing, it may more fully assure us, that the promise runs still in the same latitude and extent that it formerly run in: why, we have not only the Apostles application of the promise for our assurance, but we have God himself confirming that application made by the Apostle, in his giving in the good promised, in that extent and latitude, in which the Apostle did apply the promise: The Apostle applyes the promise in this extent, *Thou and thy house shall be saved*: God by actually giving in the good promised, assures us, that the Apostles application was according to his mind and will, that he was and would be still a God, not only to believing Gentiles, personally considered, but a God also to their respective houses: So that whether there were any

Infant

Infant-children; or any Children in their Infant capacity in theſe houſes, the baptiſm of which is recorded in Scripture, or no, is all one as to what I contend for. The promiſe of Salvation, which is equivolently the ſame with that of Gods being a God to them, appertains to the houſes of believing Parents, as ſuch, without conſideration had to the perſonal faith of thoſe houſes, or any in them. If there were no Infant-children, yet the promiſe appertains to the houſe; if there were, the promiſe appertained to them as part of ſuch a houſe: and the mention made in Scripture of the perſonal faith and repentance of ſuch houſes, or any in them, no way oppoſes, but confirms their intereſt in, and right to that promiſe of Salvation, and conſequently they ought to be baptized, as will appear from the proof of our third Propoſition.

But let that ſuffice, for the ſecond Concluſion, which is that I principally aimed at, and therefore have eſpecially inſiſted upon it. I ſhall but mention the other two. And therefore,

Fourthly, That the intereſt that the houſes of beliving Parents have in the promiſe of Salvation denominates them holy, and conſtitutes them of the Kingdom, Church, or Myſtical Body of Chriſt; this I gather from *Mark* 10. and 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. taken in conjunction with thoſe other new Teſtament Scriptures aforementioned.

Laſly,

Lastly, That this interest in the promise of Salvation accrews to the houses of believing *Parents*, by vertue of such *Parents* relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed: This is evident from that of Christ concerning *Zacheus*, *Salvation is come to his house, for as much as he is a Son of* Abraham. And from all it appears, that the very same promise, made to *Abraham* and his natural Seed, is still continued to, and setled upon believing Gentiles, which is our second Proposition: Let us now hear what is objected against what is asserted in it.

CHAP. VII.

Objections against the second subordinate Proposition, considered and answered.

Object. 1.

'TIs conceived by some, and that not a few, that what hath been affirm'd in the foregoing *Propositions*, at least the latter of them, lyes in a direct opposition to that Text of the Apostle, *Rom.* 9. 7, 8. and therefore cannot be true. And thus 'tis objected: How can it be true, that God should intend *Abrahem*'s natural Seed (take it of his natural Seed in the sence of the first *Position*) and that as such, in that promise, wherein he ingages himself to be a God to him and his Seed; or how can it be true, that this promise, in that latitude and extent should be given to, and setled upon be-

lievers

lievers under the new Teſtament; when the Apoſtle, having a direct reference to this very promiſe, poſitively affirms, *That the Children of the fleſh are not the Children of God, but the Children of the Promiſe are accounted for the Seed.* Say our Oppoſers, Certainly it cannot be true, that God ſhould intend *Abraham's* natural Seed, that is, the Children of his fleſh, and that meerly as ſuch, in that promiſe; or ſuppoſe that promiſe might have a literal reſpect to *Abraham's* natural Seed, as ſuch, yet ſure it cannot be true, that this promiſe is given to, or ſetled upon believers under the new Teſtament, ſo as that God ſhould ſtill ſtand obliged by that promiſe, to be a God to them and their natural Seed; for the Apoſtle tells us in expreſs words, *That the Children of the fleſh are not the Children of God, but the Children of the promiſe are accounted for the Seed.*

For anſwer to this Objection I ſhall, as the Lord ſhall aſſiſt, do theſe two things,

First, Shew that there is no contrariety or repugnancy, between what hath been affirmed in the foregoing Propoſitions, or either of them, and this Text of the Apoſtle.

Secondly, Shew that this place of the Apoſtle rightly underſtood, contributes not a little to the eſtabliſhment and confirmation of what hath been ſaid in the foregoing Propoſitions.

For the first, That there is no repugnancy between what hath been affirmed and this Text of the *Apostle*, will soon appear, by declaring what is the true and genuine sence of the *Apostle* in these verses: and thus it is agreed on all hands, that the *Apostles* design and scope is to open and declare how that word of promise, wherein God ingaged to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed, stood firm, and had its full accomplishment, according to the true intendment of God in it, notwithstanding the rejection of so great a part of his seed.

Beza, I judge, doth rightly state the Question answered by the Apostle, *Qui fieri possit ut rejectus sit Israel quin simul constituendum videatur irritum esse pactum Dei cum Abrahamo & ejus semine.* That was the Question, How *Israel* could be rejected, and the Covenant that God, made with *Abraham* and his Seed, not made void thereby.

Now to this Question the *Apostle* answers in a twofold general *Assertion*.

First, That all are not *Israel* that are of *Israel*.

Secondly, That because they are the Seed of *Abraham* they are not all Children.

Two

Two things might be urged as Reaſons, why the Jews could not be rejected without a failure on Gods part, in his promiſes to them: The latter, which they mainly inſiſted upon, was, That they were the Seed of *Abraham*, and that God had promiſed to be a God to him and his Seed after him.

To this latter plea the *Apoſtle* anſwers in this latter aſſertion, and ſhews, that their rejection did not make void that promiſe of God, and in order hereunto explains the true ſenſe and meaning of that promiſe.

This the *Apoſtle* doth in theſe two verſes; ſo that theſe two verſes contain the *Apoſtles* expoſition of that grand promiſe made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed.

Now that we may rightly underſtand the *Apoſtle* in the expoſition he gives us of this promiſe, and not miſtake about his expoſition, as the Jews did about the promiſe it ſelf, we muſt inquire into two things.

First, What the *Apoſtle* denyes,

Secondly, What he affirms, with reference to that promiſe.

For the firſt, *And* thus the *Apoſtle* denyes that all that were the Seed of *Abraham*, and had that promiſe appertaining to them, as his Seed, were the Children of God: Thus verſe 7. *Neither becauſe they are the Seed of Abraham, are*

they all Children, which is explained in the next verſe; where obſerve, when the *Apoſtle* ſayes, *The children of the fleſh, theſe are not the children of God*, he muſt be interpreted by the words immediately aforegoing, and his meaning is, they are not all the children of God, for ſo he expreſſes himſelf in the foregoing words. In this eighth verſe the Apoſtle amplifies, and further explains what he had more generally laid down in the ſeventh verſe; whence it is evident, that he ſpeaks of the ſame perſons in both; and anſwerably, as by the children of the fleſh, ver. 8. the ſame perſons are intended that are expreſt by that phraſe, *the Seed of Abraham*, ver 7. ſo when he ſays of the children of the fleſh, *they are not the children of God*, he means only, as he had afore expreſt, they are not all the children of God: ſome that were the children of the fleſh, were alſo the children of God, as *Iſaac* in particular; but all that were the children of the fleſh were not the children of God.

Now I ſay, the Apoſtle denyes that thoſe that were the Seed of *Abraham*, or the children of the fleſh, were all the children of God: where conſidering what the general deſign and ſcope of the Apoſtle is, *viz.* to prove the conſiſtency of *Iſraels* rejection with the truth of that promiſe, by opening and declaring the true mind and meaning of God in it, theſe two things are clearly ſuppoſed and implyed by the Apoſtle.

Firſt,

First, That those who are not the children of God, whatever reference or respect the promise had to them, yet might be rejected without breach of promise on Gods part.

Secondly, That the promise did not necessarily presuppose that God had done, or was obliged to do, for every one to whom the promise did appertain, what was absolutely necessary to their being or becoming the children of God, in such a sence as that they could not be rejected without breach of promise on Gods part.

These two things the Apostle must needs imply and suppose in this Negation: and hence the full of what he denyes is this, That this promise, whether taken as a definite promise, respecting *Abraham*'s natural Seed, as immediately proceeding from his own loins, singularly considered, or as an indefinite promise, respecting his whole race and posterity, collectively considered, did oblige God, either to be their God and own them as his people, but upon supposition of their being his children, or to do that for each particular of them, absolutely necessary to their bearing that denomination of his children.

And if any ask, What that is that is absolutely necessary to a persons bearing the denomination of a Child of God.

I answer two things.

First, Election before time.

Secondly, Supposing that person grown up to years of maturity, conversion or a saving work of grace upon the heart in time.

Now all that the Apostle denyes is, That this promise did necessarily presuppose, that all to whom it was made, were elected or chosen of God actually to inherit the good promised, or that the promise did oblige God savingly to work upon them in time; whence in respect of individual and particular persons, as they might not be elected, so they might not be savingly converted, and thereupon might be rejected of God, without any breach of promise on his part.

Secondly, What the Apostle doth affirm with reference to this promise; and thus he doth affirm, That *the children of the promise are accounted for the Seed.*

Now here again two things must be inquired into.

First, Who the Apostle means by the children of the promise? And for this, these must needs be such of *Abraham*'s natural Seed who might rightfully bear that denomination of the children of God; children of the promise must needs intend such of *Abraham*'s Seed, or such children of his flesh, who were not only the children of his flesh, but also the children of God:

God. For let it be obſerved, that the queſtion was concerning *Abraham*'s Seed, or the children of his fleſh, and that as ſuch having that promiſe pertaining unto them; whence it will undeniably follow, that both thoſe who were not the children of God, and thoſe who were the children of the promiſe, were *Abraham*'s natural Seed; and conſequently, by the children of the promiſe we muſt underſtand the elect of *Abraham*'s natural Seed, or ſuch who amongſt them had a ſaving work of grace wrought upon them.

Secondly, How they are ſaid to be accounted for the Seed? Now for this: They are ſaid by the Apoſtle, to be accounted for the Seed in ſome peculiar and ſpecial ſence, in which the other of *Abraham*'s Seed, as contradiſtinguiſhed from them, were not accounted for the Seed: Now that can be only in reſpect of their election before time, and their actual injoyment of the good promiſed in time; they cannot be ſaid to be accounted for the Seed in this ſence, as though none but theſe were intended in that promiſe, for the Reaſon before given, *viz.* Becauſe the queſtion concerning the whole natural Seed of *Abraham*, and that as they were intended in that promiſe; ſo that they could not be accounted for the Seed, as though they alone were intended in that promiſe; for the Apoſtle grants, yea, the very Queſtion he anſwers, doth neceſſarily ſuppoſe others to be intended

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in that promiſe beſides them; therefore theſe can be ſaid to be accounted for the Seed only, in the ſence and upon the account beforemen-tioned.

From all it is evident, that the Apoſtle doth not deny that *Abraham*'s natural Seed, and that as ſuch, were intended in that grand Promiſe of the Covenant; nor doth he affirm, that the children of the promiſe were only accounted for the Seed, in relation to an intereſt in that promiſe: All that he denyes is, That they are all the children of God: And all that he affirms is, That they, in a peculiar and ſpecial ſence, were accounted for the Seed in the eye of that promiſe: So that the plain and genuine meaning of the Apoſtle is this, as if he ſhould ſay, when God promiſed to be a God to *Abraham* and to his Seed, that doth not preſuppoſe that all his children were elected, or that God was obliged by that promiſe ſavingly to work upon every individual of his Seed; whereupon they might be rejected of God, and yet his word of promiſe receive its full accompliſhment, there being a certain number choſen of God from eternity, whom in time he ſavingly works upon, and who in that regard were eminently intended as the Seed in that promiſe, and in the accompliſhment of the promiſe to them it is fully verified, according to the true intent, mind and meaning of God in it.

Now

Now then what repugnancy or contrariety is there between what hath been affirmed in the foregoing Propositions, or either of them, and this Text of Scripture?

We affirm, that when God promised to *Abraham*, to be a God to him and his Seed, he intended his natural Seed as the first and next Subjects of this promise; and that this promise in the same latitude and extent is setled upon and confirmed to believing Gentiles: the Apostle denyes it not, only saith, that all to whom the promise was made are not the children of God, and thereupon might be rejected, and yet the word of promise not made void thereby; withall affirming, that there was a certain number in and among this Seed of *Abraham*, to whom this promise did appertain, that were elected of God, who never were rejected, but had the promise alwayes made good to them, and in that regard had the denomination of *Abraham's* Seed peculiarly due to them, and that the promise was fully accomplished in their injoyment of the good promised. Now I say, what shew of contrariety between what we affirm, and what the Apostle saith?

Now that this was the true intendment, mind and meaning of God in this promise, the Apostle proves, by producing a twofold Instance, wherein God himself declared that to be his sence and meaning in it.

First,

First, He instances in the Subjects of this Promise immediately descended from *Abraham*'s own loins, these were, among others, *Ishmael* and *Isaac*: and here the Apostle shews how God declared his true sence and meaning in that Promise, by his chusing *Isaac* actually to inherit the good promised, when he passed by *Ishmael*, who thereupon, through his own sin, was rejected of God, and cast out of Covenant: This peculiar choice of *Isaac* was signified to *Abraham* by promise, *At the set time will I come, and Sarah shall have a Son*; by that Promise God did tacitely intimate to *Abraham*, that *Isaac*, the Son promised him by *Sarah*, was the person chosen for the actual injoyment of the good promised; and this choice of *Isaac* was a tacite intimation, that *Ishmael* was passed by, and not designed to the joynt inheriting of the good promised with *Isaac*.

Secondly, The Apostle instances in the Subjects of this Promise mediately descended from *Abraham*, for look what was the sence of the Promise made to *Abraham*, the same was the sence and meaning of it as made to his Seed; and thus the Apostle instances in the Children of *Isaac*, and shews again how God did declare what was his mind and meaning in this Promise, as it was made to *Abraham*'s Seed in their Generations, *viz.* That as thereby he intended not infallibly to secure the good promised to all *Abraham*'s immediate Children, so he intended

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not thereby to ſecure the good promiſed to all the Children of his Seed, as included with them in the Promiſe, as made to them in their Generations; this the Lord declared by his choice of *Jacob*, when he paſſed by *Eſau*; which choice was again ſignified to *Iſaac* by promiſe, *The elder ſhall ſerve the younger*; by that promiſe God ſignified to *Iſaac*, that he had choſen *Jacob* as the perſon that ſhould actually inherit the good promiſed, whereby he intimated his paſſing by of *Eſau*.

Now upon the warrant of this twofold inſtance, the Apoſtle declares the ſence afore given, to be according to the mind and meaning of God in this promiſe; and that this is the true ſence and meaning of the Apoſtles expoſition of this Promiſe, is ſufficiently evident from what hath been already ſaid in the explication of the words, where it hath been proved, that the Apoſtle cannot be underſtood, as though he denyed that the natural Seed of *Abraham*, and that as ſuch were intended in that Promiſe; the Queſtion he anſwers being concerning *Abraham*'s natural Seed, and that as ſuch having that Promiſe appertaining to them: and therefore he cannot be ſuppoſed to deny them to be intended in the Promiſe, the very Queſtion he anſwers taking it for granted, that they were intended.

And if any ſhould ſay, It is true, the Queſtion doth ſuppoſe and take for granted, that the

the Jews, or the persons putting it, did conceive, that the Promise did intend *Abraham's* natural Seed, but that was their mistake, which the Apostle rectifies.

But to that I answer, The whole context shews it was otherwise; and that the Apostle himself doth suppose it, and take it for granted; The Apostle doth not answer a Question that might be grounded upon a mistake about the Subjects of that Promise, but he answers a Question grounded upon what really was: we see he grants some to be of *Israel*, that were not *Israel*, and that some were the Seed of *Abraham*, and as such intended in that Promise, who yet were not the Children of God; and consequently he cannot deny *Abraham's* natural Seed to be intended in that Promise, nor affirm the Children of the Promise were only accounted for the Seed; but that they are so accounted in a peculiar and special sence before opened. Now I say, that the Apostle is thus to be understood, I shall indeavour to make out a little further, though what hath been already said might suffice to those that will but seriously weigh things.

And for this let it be observed, that if the Apostle doth not restrain this term *Seed*, in that Promise, only to the Elect, then there is nothing at all said by him in this exposition he gives us of it; so much as in the least intimating that the natural Seed of *Abraham*, and that as such,

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were not intended in that Promiſe. As for what he denyes, with reference to that Promiſe, there is no one word intimating that *Abraham's* natural Seed were not intended, he only denyes, that all the Seed of *Abraham* were the Children of God, which might be true, though they were all intended in that Promiſe, as conditionally made and externally declared to *Abraham*.

Now if ſo be he doth not reſtrain this term *Seed* in this Promiſe only to the Elect, and ſo exclude all others univerſally from being intended in it, the natural Seed of *Abraham*, and that as ſuch, might be, for ought what the Apoſtle hath ſaid, intended in it. And as for what he affirms, though the Elect were in a peculiar and ſpecial ſence intended, yet others might be alſo intended, though not in that peculiar and ſpecial ſence in which they were.

Now that the Apoſtle doth not expound this term *Seed*, as meant only of the Elect, is evident by theſe three Reaſons.

First, Becauſe then he ſhould in expreſs words contradict God himſelf, God having declared that he intended ſome in that Promiſe, who were not elected, this is evident in *Deut.* 29. 10, 11, 12, 13. where the Lord tells the people of *Iſrael*, he now entred into, or rather renewed Covenant with them, to fulfil this very Promiſe made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed: and certainly he muſt needs refer to this very

Promiſe

Promiſe made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed: and certainly he muſt needs refer to this very Promiſe made to *Abraham*. Only to prevent miſtakes, and that I may not be ſuppoſed to contradict both the Truth and my ſelf, let it be noted, that I do not ſay they were intended in that Promiſe, ſo as that they had meerly, as of *Abraham*'s natural Race and Poſterity, an actual right to, and intereſt in that Promiſe; but my meaning is only this, That as that Promiſe had an indefinite reſpect to *Abraham*'s whole Race and Poſterity, collectively taken, and as theſe particular perſons, with whom God now renewed his Covenant, were afore appointed of God to be ſome of thoſe who ſhould have the benefit of the Promiſe, ſo theſe were intended in it, and anſwerably theſe were intended, not immediately and directly, but conſequently as they were foreſeen and fore appointed by God, to be the peculiar perſons that ſhould have the Promiſe, as indefinitely made to *Abraham*'s Seed, collectively taken, made good to them. Now who can ſuppoſe that every individual Member, whether Infants or grown Perſons in this Congregation, were elected or choſen actually to injoy the good promiſed? Now if the Apoſtle ſhould reſtrain this Promiſe only to the Elect, he muſt needs contradict God in this declaration here made of his mind in it. God declares plainly, he intended ſome not elected; and ſhould the Apoſtle ſay, he intended only the Elect, that would

would be a direct contradiction of God himself.

Secondly, That the Apostle cannot expound this term *Seed*, as meant only of the Elect, is evident, because at least many persons intended in that Promise might be ordinarily known to men to be the persons intended in it; but now the Elect cannot ordinarily be known by men, and that at least many intended in this Promise might ordinarily be known to be the persons intended in it, is evident, because there was a duty injoyned, with reference to them; this duty was the application of the Token of the Covenant. Now had the Elect only been intended, it had been impossible for that duty to be universally performed by man, with reference to them.

Thirdly, This is evident, because the Promise did constitute some of *Israel*, who yet were not elected, therefore the Apostle cannot be supposed to restrain the term *Seed* only to the Elect.

But two things will be said by way of reply to what hath been hitherto discoursed, for the clearing up the sence and meaning of the Apostle in this exposition he here gives of that Promise.

First, It will be ſaid, That all thoſe that make this Objection do not deny but, ſome do grant, that that promiſe did in ſome ſence intend, and had reſpect to *Abraham*'s natural Seed, and that as ſuch, *viz.* as it was a promiſe of a temporal good, or containing only a temporal bleſſing, that which theſe deny is this, *viz.* That this Promiſe (as a Promiſe of ſaving Grace, of Juſtification and Life) had reſpect to the natural Seed of *Abraham*, as ſuch; and that is the meaning of the Apoſtle when he ſayes, *The Children of the Promiſe are accounted for the Seed*, he means, they and they only are accounted for the Seed, reſpective to that Promiſe, as it was a promiſe of ſaving Grace: The Apoſtle grants the Promiſe was made to *Abraham*'s natural Seed, but there ſhews what their miſtake was, that did ſuppoſe the Promiſe would be made void, in caſe the Jews ſhould be rejected, and ſhews this to be their miſtake, That they ſuppoſed that this Promiſe, as it was a Promiſe of ſaving Grace, did appertain to the natural Seed of *Abraham*, as ſuch.

Now this miſtake the Apoſtle rectifies, and ſhews, that as ſuch a ſpiritual Promiſe, it did not at all reſpect *Abraham*'s natural Seed, as ſuch, but was made only to the Elect, they only were accounted for the Seed,

Seed, respective to this Promise as so understood.

To that I answer two things.

First, Let it be observed, that the present framers of this Objection, in the sence now expressed, do grant, that the Promise in some sence did intend *Abraham*'s natural Seed, and that as such; whence it will follow, that if it be evident, that it intended not only a temporal, but a spiritual good, as made to *Abraham*'s Seed universally, as well as to himself, of which by and by, then our first Proposition is true by the grant at least of some of our Opposers, they granting that in a sence it did intend them.

But you will say, Whatever Argument may be offered, yet the Apostle shews plainly, that as it was a Promise of saving Grace, it was made only to the Elect, for saith he, taking the Promise in this sence, *The Children of the Promise are accounted for the Seed*, and we must believe the Apostle whatever Argument may seem to prove the contrary.

I answer to this.

Secondly, Consider the Apostle doth no more restrain this Promise, as a Promise of

ſaving Grace to the Elect, than he doth reſtrain it to them as a *Promiſe* of a meer temporal good, if he doth not reſtrain it to them wholly, and in an abſolute ſence, he doth not reſtrain it to them at all; for obſerve it, in caſe he reſtrains it as a ſpiritual *Promiſe*, and not as a temporal *Promiſe*, to the Elect, that limited reſtraint muſt be expreſt either in the words themſelves, or inferr'd from the Context or the Apoſtles ſcope in them. For the words themſelves, there is nothing intimating ſuch a limited reſtraint, for ſayes he, *The Children of the fleſh are not the Children of God, but the Children of the Promiſe are accounted for the Seed.* He doth not ſay, the Children of the fleſh are not intended in that *Promiſe*, as a Promiſe of ſaving Grace. So *the Children of the Promiſe are accounted for the Seed*; not are accounted for the Seed, as that *Promiſe* was a Promiſe of ſaving Grace.

But it will be ſaid, When he ſayes of *the Children of the fleſh, they are not the Children of God*, 'tis all one as if he had ſaid, they were not intended in that Promiſe, as it is a *Promiſe* of ſaving Grace.

To that I anſwer: 'Tis not all one, in as much as 'tis poſſible, that perſons may be under a Promiſe of ſaving Grace, as made conditionally

ditionally to them, and yet not be the Children of God, in the ſence of the Apoſtle, nor ever become the Children of God in that ſence: So that unleſs it can be proved, that none can be under a Promiſe of ſaving Grace, as conditionally made, or under a Promiſe of ſaving Grace as indefinitely made to ſome ſpecies or ſort of perſons, collectively taken, unleſs they are either at preſent the Children of God, or ſhall infallibly become ſo for the future, it cannot be ſaid, 'tis all one to ſay, that for the Apoſtle to deny the natural Seed of *Abraham* to be the Children of God, and to deny they are intended in that Promiſe, as a Promiſe of ſaving Grace, becauſe they might be intended in that Promiſe, and yet never be the Children of God. Perſons may be under a conditional promiſe, or an indefinite promiſe of ſaving Grace, and yet cannot be from thence denominated in an abſolute ſence to be the Children of God, nor proved thereby, that they ſhould ever become ſo; ſo that ſuch a limited reſtraint of this promiſe to the Elect only, is not in the leaſt intimated in the words themſelves.

Secondly, For, the context and ſcope of the Apoſtle neither doth infer ſuch a limited reſtraint of the Promiſe to the Elect only, or a neceſſity of putting ſuch conſtruction upon

the words; this is evident from what hath been already ſaid in explaining the ſence and meaning of them: The words, as afore opened, as fully agree to and anſwer the Apoſtles deſign and ſcope, as if they were underſtood with a limited reſtraint, they would do, and do as fully anſwer and ſatisfie the Queſtion or Objection he was to anſwer.

This is ſo plain, that it would be ſuperfluous to add any thing more than what hath been already ſaid: So that there is nothing in the words themſelves, or that can be deduced from the Context, or the Apoſtles deſign and ſcope in them, to neceſſitate our underſtanding the Apoſtle to intend any ſuch limited reſtraint of this promiſe to the Elect only; if it be not wholly and abſolutely reſtrained to them, it is not reſtrained to them at all, for ought what appears from the Text of the Apoſtle.

Now our Oppoſers themſelves grant, That in ſome ſence the promiſe was not reſtrained to the Elect, but did intend *Abraham*'s natural Seed, as ſuch, and therefore we may conclude it was not at all reſtrained to them.

But it will be ſaid ſecondly, That though it be granted, that this promiſe, as intending both

both temporal and ſpiritual bleſſings, did intend, and was made to *Abraham*'s natural Seed, and that as ſuch, and conſequently that the Covenant did take in *Abraham*'s natural Seed under the firſt Teſtament, as is affirmed in the firſt Propoſition; yet the *Apoſtle* here ſhews, that now under the Goſpel adminiſtration it ſhould be ſo no longer.

Now the Children of the fleſh are not the Children of God in any ſence, but the Children of the Promiſe, that is, true Believers are only accounted for *Abraham*'s Seed.

To that I anſwer, 'Tis evident from the Context, that the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks not at all of the extent and latitude in which the Covenant ſhould be made with, or continued to Believers under the New Teſtament, for the Queſtion he is anſwering doth not all immediately and directly concern Believers under the New Teſtament, but wholly immediately and directly concerns the Jewes. And obſerve it, What an anſwer ſhould the Apoſtle return to the propoſed Queſtion, according to the judgment of thoſe that make this reply.

The Queſtion was, How could *Iſrael* be rejected, and God remain true to his Word

of promise made to *Abraham* their Father, with reference unto them.

Now what doth the Apostle answer to this Question?

Why, according to the Judgment of these men he answers, That though the Covenant was made with *Abraham* and his natural Seed, yet now it is only made with Believers themselves, and extends not to their natural Seed, as it did during the first Testament administration.

And what had that been to the purpose, not only the Jewish Infants, but the Parents themselves were rejected.

I, you will say, That Parents were cast off as well as their Seed is granted, yea, that is the very design of the Apostle to shew, that now under the Gospel administration the Jews themselves, though *Abraham*'s natural Seed, could no longer continue the people of God, upon the account of their fleshly descent from *Abraham*, unless they did personally believe themselves, and they not believing, both they and their Children were rejected from those priviledges they had hitherto injoyed, upon the account of their natural descent from *Abraham*.

To

To this I answer two things.

First, I deny that the Jews had their Covenant state and relation, and consequently their abiding, in the House or Family of God continued to them hitherto, upon the account of their natural descent from *Abraham*, as hath been already declared, and might be further manifested if needful. Hence this could not be the design of the Apostle, to shew the cessation of that priviledge, because there was no such priviledge heretofore vouchsafed to them, the promise considered as a definite promise, did not extend beyond *Abraham*'s natural Seed, immediately proceeding from his own loins.

Secondly, I answer, That that Promise, as an indefinite promise made to *Abraham*, with reference to his natural Seed, taken collectively, doth still appertain to the Jews, notwithstanding the rejection of so great a part of them: This the Apostle grants in this discourse, and shews how it had in part its accomplishment in the non-rejection of many of them, and shall have its full accomplishment in the general conversion of that Nation in the Ages yet to come. See *Rom.* 11. 1, 16, 25. So that this cannot be the meaning of the Apostle, because

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cauſe their preſent ſtanding in their Covenant-relation with God, from which they were now cut off, was not upon the meer account of their natural deſcent from *Abraham*, and the Promiſe, according to the true intent of God in it, doth ſtill appertain to them, notwithſtanding their rejection, therefore we muſt neceſſarily underſtand the Apoſtle, according to the ſence and meaning afore given.

I come now to the ſecond thing promiſed, and that is to ſhew, that this Text of the Apoſtle rightly underſtood, and taken in conjunction with the Context, is ſo far from carrying any contrariety to what hath been affirm'd, that it adds not a little to the confirmation of it. Yea, I dare boldly ſay, that had there been no other Scriptures to prove the truth of it, my firſt Propoſition would be, paſt all rational contradiction, eſtabliſhed from this very Text; and my ſecond Propoſition may receive no little confirmation from it.

For let it be obſerved, the Apoſtle doth plainly grant, yea, implicitly aſſert, that ſome were the Seed of *Abraham*, and that as ſuch, were the Subjects of that promiſe, who yet were not the Children of God, and in that

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regard were not accounted for the Seed, whence it is evident, that the ſame perſons might be the Seed of *Abraham*, and as ſuch intended in that promiſe, and yet in another ſence were not accounted for the Seed: they were his Seed, that is, the Seed of his fleſh, or his natural Seed, and as ſuch had the promiſe appertaining to them; but they were not the Children of God, and in that regard not accounted for the Seed, that is, not intended in this promiſe, as the perſons deſigned from eternity, actually to injoy the good promiſed; and that notwithſtanding according to the Apoſtles intendment in this term *Seed*, they were not accounted for the Seed, yet they were the fleſhly Seed of *Abraham*, and as ſuch intended in that promiſe, as the joynt Subjects of it, with others, here ſaid by the Apoſtle, in a ſpecial ſence, to be accounted for the Seed, is paſt all rational doubt evident from the Apoſtles anſwer to the forementioned Queſtion, taken in conjunction with the Inſtances produced by him, for the proof of what he aſſerts in that Anſwer.

Let but the words be carefully obſerved: Saith the Apoſtle, *Neither becauſe they are Abraham's Seed, are they all Children*, that is, the Children of God: Whence it is evident, that ſome are the Seed of *Abraham*,

Abraham, who were not the Children of God; and that when the Apoſtle grants, ſome were the Seed of *Abraham*, who were not the Children of God, his meaning is, that they had, as the Seed, or natural Children of *Abraham*, this promiſe appertaining unto them, is evident.

First, Becauſe the Queſtion he was to anſwer wholly concern'd the natural Seed of *Abraham*, and that as ſuch, having that promiſe appertaining unto them, as before obſerved: hence undoubtedly when in way of anſwer to this Queſtion he ſaith, becauſe they are the Seed of *Abraham*, they are not all the Children of God, he muſt needs ſpeak of the ſame perſons that the Queſtion doth concern, otherwiſe his anſwer had been no wayes pertinent to the Queſtion.

Secondly, This is evident from the Inſtances that the Apoſtle produces to prove what he had aſſerted in this anſwer; and thus he inſtances in *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, and ſhews how they were elected, and in that regard accounted for the Seed; where the Apoſtle muſt needs have reference to ſome others coming in competition with them, in regard of their ſtanding in a like capacity reſpective to the promiſe as externally made and declar'd to *Abraham*: plainly thus the

Apoſtle

Apoſtle muſt needs have reference to ſome others who were *Abraham*'s Seed, and as ſuch had a common external right to, and intereſt in the promiſes with *Iſaac* and *Jacob*; and theſe were *Iſhmael* and *Eſau*; did not the Apoſtle ſuppoſe and grant, that they ſtood in the like capacity, reſpective to theſe promiſes, as externally made and declared to *Abraham*, with *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, the producing of theſe two Inſtances had made nothing to his purpoſe, nor had been any proof of what he had before aſſerted, in way of anſwer to the Queſtion propoſed; for the Apoſtle to aſſert, that all that are *Abraham*'s Seed are not the Children of God, and that by way of anſwer to the forementioned Queſtion, and then only to declare how *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, the one of *Abraham*'s Seed, immediately proceeding from his one loins, the other of his Race and Poſterity, were intended in this promiſe, as made to *Abraham*'s Seed in their Generations, as being elected, and not to ſuppoſe and grant, that there were ſome others, who were alike, either of *Abraham*'s immediate Seed, or of his Race and Poſterity, intended in this promiſe, who were not elect, had made nothing at all to his preſent purpoſe, but would indeed have evidenced the quite contrary to what he affirms. Whence it appears, it is full evidence as though written with the beams of the Sun, that the Apoſtle doth

grant,

grant, that both *Ishmael* and *Esau* were the Subjects of this promise, the one as one of *Abraham*'s Children, immediately proceeding from his own loins, the other included in the promise, as made to *Abraham*'s Seed in their Generations, and consequently that the promise did belong to *Abraham*'s natural Seed, as such, which undoubtedly establishes the truth of my first Proposition, and no way opposes, but rather confirms the second.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

A ſecond, third, and fourth Objection against the foregoing Propoſition refelled.

Object. 2.

SOme object, That the Promiſe, wherein God ingaged to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed, cannot in that latitude and extent be ſetled upon and confirmed to believing Gentiles, becauſe that Covenant Believers are now under, is a Covenant wholly divers from that eſtabliſhed with *Abraham*; and when the Covenants are divers, the good covenanted cannot be one and the ſame, at leaſt the Subjects of the one cannot lay claim to the good of the other, by vertue of that Covenant they are under: hence a Believer, as a Believer, that is, as *Abraham*'s ſpiritual Seed, could not lay claim to the old Covenant-promiſes, if not deſcended from *Abraham* by *Iſaac* after the fleſh; ſo a Believers fleſhly ſeed, take it either of *Abraham*, or any other Believer, cannot lay claim to the New Covenant Promiſes, unleſs

born again, and engraffed into Chriſt by Faith.

Now before I return a direct Anſwer to this Objection, I ſhall a little enquire what are the true Notions and Conceptions of the perſons framing it, about that Covenant entred by God with *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations, that ſo rightly underſtanding their ſence and apprehenſions of that Covenant, I may return a more full and direct anſwer to what is objected. And thus, for ought I can yet underſtand, either by the moſt ſerious peruſal of their Writings, or by what I can gather from their words, they expreſs and declare their Notions and Conceptions, we are now enquiring after; one of theſe two wayes.

Firſt, That God made a twofold Covenant with *Abraham*, the one a Covenant of Grace, the other a legal or temporal Covenant, and that the Covenant of Grace was made with him, and his ſpiritual Seed, *viz.* Believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, without any reſpect at all to a fleſhly deſcent, either from *Abraham* himſelf, or from any of his Seed.

Secondly, That the legal or temporal Covenant was made with *Abraham* and his fleſhly Seed, and only with them, and that as continued in the line of *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, and that this was the Covenant, the Jews, during the firſt Teſtament adminiſtration, were under, and the only

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Covenant they were under, as the fleſhly Seed of *Abraham*.

Secondly, Others declare their ſence and conception thus, That there was but one Covenant made with *Abraham*, and that was a mixt Covenant, conſiſting partly of ſpiritual, and partly of temporal Promiſes; and as this Covenant was a mixt Covenant, ſo anſwerably the Seed of *Abraham* muſt be diſtinguiſhed off. There was, ſay they, his natural Seed, and there was and is his ſpiritual Seed, Now theſe hold that the Covenant, as conſiſting of temporal, or as ſome expreſs it, domeſtick or politick bleſſings, was made with *Abraham*, and his natural or fleſhly Seed in their generations; but the Covenant, as conſiſting of ſpiritual bleſſings, was made with *Abraham* only, as a ſpiritual Father, and with his ſpiritual Seed, that is, Believers, whether Jews or Gentiles. Now though our Oppoſites do thus variouſly expreſs themſelves, yet they all agree in the general, that only temporal bleſſings did appertain to *Abraham*'s natural Seed, as ſuch, and that ſpiritual bleſſings were wholly or alone promiſed to *Abraham*, in reference to his ſpiritual or myſtical Seed; and ſome add, that the Covenant, as conſiſting of temporal bleſſings, was a typical Covenant, *viz.* a Covenant typifying the Goſpel Covenant, under which Believers now are; though how to make ſence of that notion, eſpecially themſelves granting a Covenant of Grace was now eſtabliſhed with *Abraham*, with reference to himſelf and

his ſpiritual Seed, will, I judge, be a matter of no little difficulty; but I ſhall leave it to the perſons concerned in it, if any ſuch yet there be. And thus I have given a brief, yet, I ſuppoſe, a full account of the Notions and Conceptions of our Objectors, about the Covenant now eſtabliſhed with *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations, and come now to anſwer the Objections propoſed: And for anſwer to it I ſhall do theſe two things.

First, Prove that there is no ſuch real and ſpecifical difference between theſe two Covenants, as the Objectors ſuppoſe, and take for granted that there is.

Secondly, Shew that notwithſtanding the Covenant made with *Abraham*, and that made with Believers, ſhould be really and ſpecifically divers the one from the other, yet upon ſuppoſal of the truth of what cannot be gainſaid by our Oppoſers, unleſs they ſhall in expreſs terms contradict the Apoſtle, the ſecond Propoſition may be true.

First, For the firſt of theſe I ſhall do two things.

First, Prove that this Covenant, that God entred with *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations, was a Covenant of Grace, and in particular, that this Promiſe of that Covenant, wherein God engaged himſelf to be a God to him and his Seed, was a Promiſe of a ſpiritual bleſſing,

bleſſing, a good tranſcending any temporal good whatſoever.

Secondly, *Prove* that this Covenant, now eſtabliſhed with *Abraham*, is the ſelf ſame Covenant, for the ſubſtance of it, made with Believers under the New Teſtament.

For the firſt of theſe I need ſay but little, becauſe others have ſaid ſo much: See Dr. *Winter* in his *Treatiſe of Infant-Baptiſm*, as alſo Mr. *Ball* upon the *Covenant*, Mr. *Warren* and others; and therefore in brief take only theſe three or four Arguments.

The firſt Argument, If that Covenant, as eſtabliſhed with *Abraham* and his natural Seed, was only a temporal or legal Covenant, or the *Promiſes* appertaining to his natural Seed, were only temporal *Promiſes*, then many thouſands, who were the actual Subjects of that Covenant, and the *Promiſes* thereof, might and did never enjoy any benefit by it, and that meerly through Gods not performing what himſelf had promiſed, without any default on their own or their *Parents* part: But none, who are the actual Subjects of the Covenant and *Promiſes* thereof, ever did or could fall ſhort of the good covenanted, meerly through Gods not performing what he had covenanted and promiſed, without a default either of the parties themſelves, or of their *Parents*; Therefore this Covenant, as eſtabliſhed with *Abraham* and his natural Seed,

could not be a meer temporal or legal Covenant, or a Covenant conſiſting only of temporal bleſſings, but muſt needs be a Covenant of Grace, or a Covenant conſiſting of ſaving benefits and bleſſings.

For the conſequence in the Major Propoſition, that cannot be denied, in as much as many thouſands, who were the actual Subjects of this Covenant and the Promiſes thereof, whether they were ſo, as they were *Abraham*'s immediate natural Seed, or were ſo, as included with their Covenant-parents, in that phraſe, in their generations, might and did die in their infancy, before ever they came to reap and injoy any temporal benefit, by that Covenant or the Promiſes thereof. Now this could ariſe from no other head or ſpring, but only Gods not performing to them what he had promiſed. And if it ſhould be ſaid, Though God did deny to give them in that very temporal good contained in the Promiſes of that Covenant, yet they were infallibly ſaved, and ſo had only an exchange of a temporal good for a ſpiritual; though they had not that particular good covenanted, yet they had a better good, *viz.* the good of eternal life.

But to that I anſwer two things:

Firſt, Grant it be ſo; yet they never had any benefit by this Covenant, or the Promiſes of it, the actual Subjects of which yet they were, neither could they enjoy eternal life by vertue of that Covenant, or any Promiſes of it, according

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ing to the judgment of our Oppoſers, in as much as it was, according to their judgment, only a temporal Covenant.

But ſome will ſay, Though they had not ſalvation by vertue of this Covenant, yet all Infants dying in their infancy, before they commit any actual ſin, are infalibly ſaved, and conſequently thoſe whoſe caſe falls under our preſent conſideration were ſaved.

I anſwer, Suppoſe it ſhould be ſo yet.

Secondly, I ſay, That many thouſands might live to commit actual ſin, and yet die before they come to enjoy any benefit by this Covenant and the Promiſes thereof, ſuppoſing it be only a legal or temporal Covenant, and conſequently might not only be deprived of any benefit by this Covenant, meerly through Gods not performing what he had promiſed to them, but might through their own ſin fall ſhort of any higher good, which may be ſuppoſed ſhould have been given in lieu of the good of this Covenant. But now for any to fall wholly ſhort of that good promiſed to them, eſpecially when nothing is given in lieu thereof, meerly through Gods not performing what he had promiſed to them, is inconſiſtent with the truth and faithfulneſs of God, who hath ſtiled himſelf, A God keeping Covenant and mercy for ever; and therefore this Covenant could not, as made to *Abraham's* natural Seed, be a meer temporal Covenant, promiſing only a temporal good, but muſt needs be a Covenant of Grace, conſiſting of

ſpiritual *Promiſes*, as Juſtification, Adoption, the in-dwelling preſence of the Spirit, Life and Glory, *&c.*

Secondly, If God ingaged himſelf to be a God to *Abraham*'s natural Seed by this Covenant and the *Promiſes* thereof, and to have God engaged by Covenant to a people to be their God, be a greater and more excellent good, than it is to enjoy any meer temporal good whatever, then this Covenant was made with *Abraham*'s natural Seed, as ſuch, was not a meer temporal Covenant, nor the *Promiſes* of it, *Promiſes* of meer temporal bleſſings: But the Covenant was a Covenant of Grace, and the *Promiſes* of it *Promiſes* of ſpiritual bleſſings. But the former is true, therefore the latter.

The Conſequence in the Major propoſition is undeniable, unleſs any ſhall affirm, that there may be a good, greater and more excellent, than any temporal good can poſſibly be, which yet is no ſpiritual good, or which may be given to men no way intereſſed in the Covenant of Grace; if any ſuch good can be found out, that excels any temporal good whatſoever, and yet is not a ſaving good, hath no reference and relation to the ſalvation of thoſe that enjoy it, they will do ſomething to the invalidating this Argument; till then I ſhall take it for granted, that no ſuch good is imaginable.

And for the Minor propoſition, that is ſufficiently evident from that, *Gen.* 17. 7. compared with *Pſalm* 144. and the latter end; We

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ſee from this *Gen.* 17. that God did ingage himſelf, by the Promiſe of this Covenant, to be a God to *Abraham's* natural Seed, as ſuch, *I will be a God to thee and thy Seed*; which Promiſe, as hath been proved, reſpects his natural Seed, as ſuch, as the immediate and next Subjects of it; beſides, according to the judgment of our Oppoſers, the Land of *Canaan* was given to all *Abraham's* natural Seed, immediately deſcending from him by *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, ſetting aſide *Eſau* and his poſterity, as the proper and ſpecial good intended in this Covenant, as reſpecting them. Now we ſee plainly, as words can make any thing plain in the world, God ingages by promiſe, not only to give them that Land, but to be a God unto them, *Gen.* 17. 8. And that to have God engaged by Covenant, to be a God to any people, is a greater and more excellent good, than any meer temporal good, is evident from that paſſage of the *Pſalmiſt*, where, we ſee, he plainly prefers this good above any temporal good whatſoever; for having ſpoken of their happineſs, who have the enjoyment of temporal mercies and bleſſings, he adds, as preferring this above all, *Yea, happy is that people, whoſe God is Jehovah.* Now how could the *Pſalmiſt* prefer an intereſt in God above the enjoyment of all worldly felicity, in caſe it was but a temporal good it ſelf, or a good that only referred to mans temporal happineſs and felicity, or had no reference to any higher happineſs than the things of the world have? Yea let me ſay, did this Promiſe import only a temporal good, their happineſs,

happineſs, who had God, as their God, by vertue of it, according to the terms upon which it was now given, their happineſs, I ſay, had been rather leſs than greater than the happineſs of thoſe, whoſe portion wholly lyes in the things of the world; ſo that the *Pſalmiſt* might better have prefixed this *yea* to the happineſs of others, than to their happineſs, whoſe God is the Lord, and might have ſaid, Happy is the people whoſe God is the Lord, yea, happy is the people who is in ſuch a caſe, in reſpect of worldly proſperity, as is before expreſſed.

Object. But it may be ſome will ſay, This having the Lord engaged to be a peoples God, of which the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks, is meant of their having him engaged as their God by the Covenant of Grace, and not of their having him engaged, as their God, by the Covenant made with *Abraham* and his natural Seed; and ſo it is granted, that to have a covenant-intereſt in God, is a good, vaſtly greater and more excellent, than any temporal good whatſoever.

But to that I anſwer, The *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks of a covenant intereſt abſolutely, without diſtinguiſhing of the *Covenant* conveying that intereſt; and where the Scripture doth not diſtinguiſh, we ought not; and conſequently the Scripture preferring a covenant-intereſt in God above all outward and worldly felicity whatſoever, we may and ought to conclude, there is no covenant-intereſt, but what doth ſo vaſtly excel

excel any temporal good whatſoever; and conſequently, that the intereſt the natural Seed of *Abraham* had in God, was a good tranſcending any temporal good, and anſwerably muſt needs be a ſpiritual good; whence it will undeniably follow, that this Covenant conveying this intereſt in God unto them, was a Covenant of Grace, and that this promiſe was a promiſe of a ſpiritual and ſaving good.

Third Argument, If that Promiſe of the Covenant entred with *Abraham* and his natural Seed, as ſuch, which according to the letter and outward face of the words, did intend and point to a meer temporal good, did yet, according to a more inward ſence and meaning of the Holy Ghoſt in it, intend a ſpiritual good, typified by that temporal good, then that Promiſe, which according to the letter and outward face of the words, did intend and point to a ſpiritual good, muſt needs be underſtood of that ſpiritual good, which, according to the letter and outward face of the words, it did intend and point to; and conſequently that Covenant muſt needs be a Covenant of ſpiritual bleſſings: but the former is true, therefore the latter. For the Conſequence in the Major Propoſition of the Proſyllogiſm, I ſuppoſe, it will not be denied by any that are Maſters of their own Reaſon, if that promiſe of the Land of *Canaan*, which in the letter, and according to the outward face of the words, intended only a temporal good, (for *Canaan*, according to the letter, was but a tempo-

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ral good.) Now if that Promiſe, according to a more inward ſence of the Holy Ghoſt, intended a ſpiritual good, ſurely that Promiſe, of Gods being a God, which in the letter, and according to the outward face of the word, intends a ſpiritual good, muſt needs be underſtood of that good it did in the letter and outward face of the words intend; and for the antecedent, that I ſuppoſe will be denied, *viz.* that that promiſe of *Canaan* did, according to a more inward ſence of the Holy Ghoſt, intend and point to a ſpiritual good; but this is ſo evident, that it doth indeed admit of no contradiction, from thoſe who will not profeſſedly ſet themſelves to oppoſe the Scriptures: See *Heb.* 11. 9, 10. *He looked for a City, whoſe Maker and Builder is God.* By what warrant did he look for this City? Doubtleſs by the warrant of this Promiſe of the Land of *Canaan*; but for this ſee Mr. *Carter*, in his *Abraham's Covenant opened*, page 23, 43. See alſo Mr. *Tombs* his *Exercitation*, page 2. Now then both parts of the Proſyllogiſm being true, it will undeniably follow, that this Covenant, as made with *Abraham* and his natural ſeed, was a Covenant of Grace, or did conſiſt of ſpiritual Promiſes; and in particular, that that Promiſe, wherein God ingaged himſelf to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed, was a Promiſe of ſaving Grace.

The fourth Argument, That this Promiſe of the Covenant in particular, wherein God ingaged himſelf to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed,

Seed, as it did reſpect his natural Seed, as ſuch, did intend and import a ſpiritual good, or was a Promiſe, as ſome ſpeak, of ſaving Grace, that is, did intend ſuch a ſpiritual bleſſing, as had a direct reference to future ſalvation: I prove thus, *viz.* Becauſe it did, as it doth reſpect, or was made to *Abraham*'s myſtical Seed, intend, as is confeſſed by all, a ſpiritual good, whence we argue; If all Promiſes made in the ſame words, terms, and expreſſions to divers perſons ſeverally and particularly conſidered, do alwayes ſignifie and intend one and the ſame good, as made to one, that they do as made to another, unleſs God himſelf hath ſome where or ſome way declared his ſence and meaning in them to be divers, as made to one, from what it is as made to another, and this Promiſe in particular be made in the ſame words, terms and expreſſions to *Abraham*'s natural Seed, that it is as made to his myſtical Seed, and God hath no where or no way declared his ſence and meaning in it, as made to his natural Seed, to be divers from what it is, as made to his myſtical Seed, then it muſt needs intend and ſignifie one and the ſame good, as made to the one; that it doth as made to the other, and conſequently it ſignifying and intending a ſpiritual good, as made to his myſtical Seed, muſt needs intend a ſpiritual good as made to his natural Seed: But the former is true, therefore the latter; That the Promiſe was made to *Abraham*'s whole Seed, whether natural, taking that phraſe in the ſenſe before opened, or myſtical, hath been ſufficiently

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proved already; and that it did intend a ſpiritual good, or was a promiſe of ſaving Grace, as made to his myſtical Seed, is not denied by our Oppoſers. Now let it be either ſhewed where or by what way God hath declared his ſence and meaning in it, as it was made to *Abraham*'s natural Seed, to be diverſe from what it is, as made to his myſtical Seed, or let it be proved, that the Promiſe made, as before expreſſed, may carry a ſence and ſignification, as made to one, different from what it doth as made to another: This latter, I judge, will not be attempted, the attempting of it will be but an attempt to raze the foundation of all the comfort of Chriſtians, and whether God hath any where or any way declared his ſence and meaning in it, as made to *Abraham*'s naturalSeed, to be diverſe from what it is, as made to his myſtical, ſhall be conſidered by and by; in the mean time we may evidently ſee, that this Covenant, as made with *Abraham*'s natural Seed, and that as ſuch was a Covenant of Grace, or did conſiſt of Promiſes of ſpiritual and ſaving bleſſings; and from what hath been ſaid, it evidently appears, there is no ſuch real and ſpecifical difference between that Covenant made with *Abraham*, and that Believers are under, as this Objection doth ſuppoſe and take for granted; it evidently appears, they are not ſpecifically two Covenants, but *quoad ſubſtantiam*, one and the ſame: Now the foundation of this Objection being removed, the Objection falls to the ground, and hath no weight in it.

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Secondly, That this Covenant now made with *Abraham* and his Seed, is one and the ſame for ſubſtance that Believers, under the Goſpel adminiſtration are under: This I evidence by theſe two Arguments.

Firſt, If this Covenant made with *Abraham* and his Seed was not diſanulled, either by the Law, or by or together with any change or alteration God hath made in his adminiſtrations, with reference to his Church in after times, then it was never diſanulled, but is ſtill in being, and conſequently the ſame in ſubſtance with that Covenant, according unto which God doth diſpence and give out his ſaving mercies and bleſſings to believing Gentiles in the times of the Goſpel: but the former is true, therefore the latter. Certainly it cannot be denied, but that this Covenant is ſtill in being and in force, yea, is that very Covenant, according to which God doth diſpence his bleſſings and mercies to believing Gentiles in the times of the Goſpel, in caſe it was never diſanulled, unleſs any ſhall ſay, there is a twofold Covenant of Grace ſtill in being, one a temporal Covenant, another a ſpiritual Covenant, which is not affirmed by any that I have yet heard of, or met with, and therefore the conſequence in the Major propoſition will not, I judge, be queſtioned by any: For the Minor propoſition, *viz.* That this Covenant made with *Abraham* and his Seed, was yet never diſanulled or abrogated, is expreſly declared by the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 3. 17. *This I ſay, Brethren,*

that

that the Covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ, the Law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disanul, that it should make the Promise of none effect. What Covenant the Apostle here intends is sufficiently evident, as from the foregoing verses, so from the whole context, *viz.* That Covenant made with *Abraham* and his Seed in their generations, as hath been before proved. Now saith the Apostle of this Covenant, the Law which was given four hundred and thirty years after the establishment of it, could not disanul it; and let it be diligently observed, that in case this Covenant had been disanulled either at, or any time before the coming of faith, as the Apostle speaks, that is, at the laying aside the Mosaical Pedagogy, and the setting up the Gospel administration in the room thereof (and from that time since, sure none will pretend it hath been disanulled) it had been all one as to the design of the Apostle, as if it had been disanulled by the Law, had it been disanulled at the setting up, yea, or were to have been disanulled during the dispensation of the Gospel, under which we are: The Apostle could no more have proved, that the blessing of *Abraham* was come upon the Gentiles through Christ, as believed in, from the tenour of that Covenant, as we see he doth, then if it had been disanulled by the Law, for if it had not been disanulled by the Law, yet if it had been disanulled at, or consequent to the setting up of the Gospel administration, the tenour of that Covenant had no way proved what

what the Apoſtle deſigned the proof of: To what purpoſe ſhould the Apoſtle have produced the tenour of that Covenant, to prove the neceſſity of the Gentiles incorporation into Chriſt, in order to their enjoying the bleſſing of *Abraham*, had it been now diſanulled, in caſe it had not been diſanulled by the Law; ſo that it is paſt all doubt, that that Covenant was not diſanulled, when the Apoſtle wrote to the *Galatians*, nor was to be diſanulled, during the Goſpel adminiſtration we are now under, and conſequently there being but one Covenant, according to which the benefits and bleſſings of the Goſpel, are diſpenſed unto Gentile Believers, it muſt needs be this very Covenant afore made with *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, which is the thing to be proved.

Secondly, If believing Gentiles enjoy the ſaving bleſſings and benefits of the Goſpel, as the Seed of *Abraham*, by vertue of that very Promiſe of the Covenant made with *Abraham*, and his Seed in their generations, then the Covenant made with him and his Seed is one and the ſame for ſubſtance with that Covenant, believers are ſtill under; but the former is true, therefore the latter: It is marvellous how it can enter into the heart of any man, that is maſter of his own underſtanding, to imagine, that there ſhould be a real and ſpecifical difference, between that Covenant made with *Abraham*, and the Covenant Believers are now

under, when it is by vertue of the fundamental Promiſe of that Covenant made with *Abraham*, that they enjoy all the good of the Goſpel, or all the ſaving good they are by Chriſt made partakers of: Can they be under one Covenant, and yet enjoy all the good they do enjoy by Chriſt, by vertue of another Covenant, really and ſpecifically divers from that they are under, and which is long ſince diſanulled and abrogated? To affirm it it would be an abſolute contradiction: And that they do enjoy all the good they have by Chriſt, as they are *Abraham's* Seed, by vertue of this very Promiſe of that Covenant made with *Abraham*, is ſo evident throughout this whole diſcourſe of the Apoſtle, that it needs no other proof, than the bare reciting of his words, ſee *Gal.* 3. 29. *If ye are Chriſts, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to Promiſe.*

But it may be ſome will yet object, Certainly, notwithſtanding all that hath been ſaid, there muſt needs be a real and ſpecifical difference between the Covenant that the Jews were under, during the firſt Teſtament adminiſtration, and the Covenant that Believers are under, during the new Teſtament adminiſtration; for doth not the Scripture expreſly call them two Covenants? doth not the new Teſtament frequently ſpeak of a new Covenant that Believers are now under, in a contradiſtinction from the old.

To

To that I anſwer, That when the Scripture ſpeaks of two Covenants, or ſpeaks of a new Covenant eſtabliſhed with Believers under the new Teſtament, it alwayes hath reference to that Covenant, made with the people of *Iſrael* at Mount *Sinai*, and never hath reference to this Covenant made with *Abraham*; the words are as plain as words can be expreſſed, ſee *Gal.* 4. latter end, *Heb.* 8. 8. Yea, the Scripture is expreſs that the new Covenant is the ſame that was firſt entred with *Abraham*; So that, I ſay, the Covenant of Grace we are now under, is not another Covenant, ſpecifically different from this made with *Abraham*, but they are for the ſubſtance one and the ſame; and hence this Objection not only vaniſheth, but we have an additional confirmation of the truth of what is affirmed in our ſecond Propoſition; and we might add,

5. A fifth Argument thus, If the Covenant be one and the ſame, then the Promiſes of it muſt, unleſs limited by God himſelf, run in one and the ſame extent and latitude; but the Covenant is one and the ſame, and the Promiſes are not limited by God himſelf; therefore they muſt run in one and the ſame extent and latitude: But the truth aſſerted is ſufficiently evident, therefore I need not inlarge upon it.

I ſhall come to the ſecond thing propoſed in anſwer to this Objection.

Secondly, Notwithſtanding the Covenant made with *Abraham*, and that made with Believers, ſhould be really and ſpecifically diverſe the one from the other, yet upon the ſuppoſal of the truth of what cannot be gainſaid by our Oppoſers, unleſs they ſhall in expreſs terms contradict the Apoſtle himſelf, this ſecond Propoſition may be true, and conſequently the aſſerting and maintaining, that the Promiſe made to *Abraham*, in that latitude and extent, as to take in his natural Seed, as joynt Subjects with him of the ſame Promiſe, is given to and ſetled upon believing Gentiles, in the ſame extent and latitude, doth not neceſſarily require the aſſerting and maintaining the Covenant entred with him, and the Covenant entred with Believers, to be one and the ſame Covenant: for the clearing up and evidencing of this, let it be obſerved, that the Apoſtle doth in expreſs words affirm, That if the Gentiles are Chriſts, they are *Abraham*'s Seed and Heirs, according to the Promiſe, *Gal.* 3. 29. Whence it is undeniably evident, that believing Gentiles are Heirs to *Abraham*'s bleſſing, or to the Promiſe made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, as they are conſidered under that notion and conſideration as his Seed.

Secondly, Which follows from this, that they are Heirs to that Promiſe, or the bleſſing contained in that Promiſe made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, which bleſſing, as I have proved before, was the ſame with that which

which *Abraham* himſelf was bleſſed with: theſe two things cannot be gainſaid, but muſt be granted by all that will not in expreſs terms contradict the Apoſtle.

Now then let me a little argue with our Oppoſers thus; either that Covenant entred with *Abraham*, and entred with believing Gentiles, is one and the ſame, or they are two Covenants, ſpecifically diverſe the one from the other: The firſt they deny, the latter they affirm. Well then, the *Promiſe* contained in it was either a *Promiſe* of a meer temporal good, or a ſpiritual good. Yes, ſay our Oppoſers, it was a temporal good, as the *Promiſe* was made to *Abraham*, with reference to his natural Seed. Well then, the bleſſing or good contained in this very *Promiſe*, as it was made to *Abraham*, with reference to his ſpiritual or myſtical Seed, is either a temporal or a ſpiritual good; the latter here muſt, and I ſuppoſe will, be granted by our Oppoſers themſelves: It is evident then, according to the Judgment of our Oppoſers, that the ſame *Promiſe* made to *Abraham*, with reference to his natural Seed, and as made to him with reference to them, only importing a temporal good, may be given to, and ſetled upon believing Gentiles, and that by the Covenant of Grace, and that as given to, and ſetled upon them, may import and ſignifie a ſpiritual good; but it is the Covenant of Grace, that is made with believing Gentiles, is agreed on all hands; that believing Gentiles are Heirs to that *Promiſe* made to *Abraham*, with reference to his

Seed, is expreſly affirmed by the Apoſtle; whence it will undeniably follow, that either the Covenant muſt be one and the ſame, and the Promiſes thereof intend one and the ſame good; as made both with reference to *Abraham*'s natural, and alſo his ſpiritual Seed, which is undoubtedly the truth; or elſe that the ſame Promiſe made to *Abraham*, with reference to his natural Seed, according to that Covenant then entred with him; and that as ſo made, with reſpect to them, may import only a temporal good, may yet be given to, and ſetled upon believing Gentiles, by another Covenant, and that as given to, and ſetled upon them, may import a ſpiritual good; and conſequently that the Promiſe may run in the ſame extent and latitude, in which it was made to *Abraham*, as now it is made to believing Gentiles, though the Covenant, in which that Promiſe was contained, as made to *Abraham*, was really and ſpecifically diverſe from that that Covenant, in which that Promiſe is contained, as made to believing Gentiles; for if ſo be the ſame Promiſe, as ſimply and abſolutely conſidered, may be given unto and ſetled upon believing Gentiles, by a Covenant diverſe from that, according to which it was firſt given to *Abraham*, why may not that Promiſe be given unto, and ſetled upon believing Gentiles, in the ſame latitude and extent in which it was firſt given to *Abraham*; If the Promiſe be given to believing Gentiles, why may it not be given in the full extent and latitude of it? Certainly no rational account can be given. And here let it

be

be carefully observed, that both we and our Opposers are agreed, That *Abraham*'s blessing, or the good contained in that Promise, wherein God ingaged to be a God to him and his Seed, is granted to believing Gentiles; all the Question is, whether it be given to them in the same latitude and extent, in which it was given to *Abraham* and his natural Seed; whence it lyes upon our Objectors to shew some Reason why, supposing there should be such a difference between these two supposed covenants, the Promise may not be continued in the same latitude and extent, in which it was at first given; as well as the Promise it self, absolutely taken, may be given or continued to believing Gentiles, notwithstanding that difference they imagine between these supposed distinct Covenants, so that the granting the Covenants to be really and specifically diverse one from the other, no more oppoſeth the truth of this our second Proposition, than it doth oppose what the Objectors themselves do hold, at least which they must hold, unless they will expresly contradict the Apostle in what he expresly affirms: and therefore I say, upon the supposal of what the Objectors themselves must grant, the affirming and maintaining the Promise to run in the same latitude and extent to believing Gentiles, in which it ran in unto *Abraham*, doth not necessarily require the affirming or maintaining, that the Covenant is one and the same: our Opposers must grant, that the Promise made to *Abraham*, either with reference to himself, or

with reference to his Seed, and it is all one, whether we take it the one way or the other, is given to, and setled upon believing Gentiles, we say it is given to, and setled upon them, in the same latitude and extent in which it was given to *Abraham*, both in reference to himself and his natural Seed: and now supposing the Covenant believing Gentiles are under, should be really diverse from that entred with *Abraham*, how that should contradict what we affirm, more than it should contradict what the Objectors themselves must grant, is impossible to imagine. So that, I say, the Covenant is one and the same for substance; but supposing it were not, yet our Proposition might and would hold true.

Object. It is objected by some, That the Infant-seed of believing Gentiles cannot, with any shew of reason, be supposed to be taken in as joynt Subjects of the Covenant of Grace, and the Promises thereof, with their Parents, meerly upon the account of their Parents faith, in as much as we see plainly, that the Jews themselves, though they were the natural Seed of *Abraham* (whose Seed in reason should have enjoyed as great priviledges as the natural Seed of any believing Gentile) could not upon the meer account of their fleshly descent from *Abraham*, be admitted into the Gospel-covenant, but for their unbelief were rejected, notwithstanding their relation unto *Abraham*, as his natural. Now say our Oppofers, if so be, either the natural Seed of *Abraham*, or the natural

ral Seed of Believers, had been or were to be received into the Gospel-covenant, together with their Parents, meerly upon the account of their Parents faith, and had had, or have as the Seed of such Parents, a right to the Ordinances and Priviledges of that Covenant; then the Jews, they being the natural Seed of *Abraham*, had had a right to the Gospel-covenant, and might, yea, ought to have been admitted into the Gospel-church by Baptism, by vertue of that their Relation to *Abraham*, as his natural Seed, and could not justly have been refused for the want of a personal faith and repentance of their own, they being, notwithstanding their want of a personal faith and repentance, yet *Abraham*'s natural Seed, and therefore certainly the Jews had either wrong done them by the Apostles, in not admitting them by Baptism into the Gospel-church, or else we must relinquish our plea for Infant-right to Baptism, upon the account of their joynt interest in the Covenant, together with their Parents; for can we think the Apostles would so highly wrong the Jews, as to deny them that priviledge which, as *Abraham*'s Seed, they had a right unto? or can it be imagined, that they, though the natural Seed of *Abraham*, who was such an eminent believer, and the Father of the faithful, should have no right to be admitted into the Gospel church, and yet the fleshly Seed of believing Gentiles should have a right to such an admission; And that which makes this Objection seem more weighty to some is, that they suppose we hold, that the Infant-

Infant-seed of believing *Parents* do stand related to *Abraham* as his Seed, and do baptize them upon that account: And how the Infant-seed of believing Gentiles should be supposed to stand related to *Abraham* as his Seed, and upon that account be baptized, when his own natural Seed could no longer bear the denomination of his Seed, with reference to the Promises of the Covenant of Grace, cannot be imagined, but seems to be matter of great wonder, yea, and amazement unto some.

Answ. I answer, What hath been already said, both for the explication of this term *Seed*, and for the removal of some Objections raised up against the truth, asserted in the foregoing Propositions, hath so far obviated and prevented this Objection, as that little more need be added for the removing of it out of our way. The Objection, as we may easily see, is grounded upon, and receives what strength it hath from a twofold Supposition.

First, A Supposition that we affirm, at least that it will unavoidably follow from what we do affirm, that *Abraham*'s natural Seed, both immediately and mediately proceeding from his loins, had a right to the Covenant of Grace, and the promises, benefits and priviledges thereof, meerly by vertue of their relation to *Abraham*, as his natural Seed;

Secondly,

Secondly, A Suppoſition that we hold, that the natural Seed of believing Gentiles are, by vertue of that their relation to ſuch believing Parents, accounted for the Seed of *Abraham*, and on that account to be baptiſed.

Now as to the former of theſe Suppoſitions, it will ſoon appear, to all that attend to what hath been ſaid, that I am no way concerned in it, having affirmed, and I hope ſufficiently proved, the quite contrary, *viz.* That the Covenant, as at firſt eſtabliſhed with *Abraham*, did not conſtitute a Covenant-relation between God and any of his natural Seed, meerly as ſuch, beyond thoſe that did immediately proceed from his own loins, but that the right and intereſt that any individual or particular perſon of his natural Seed, during their Infant-capacity, beyond his immediate Children, had in the Covenant and Promiſes of it, aroſe from their relation to their immediate Parents, included with them in that phraſe, *their Generations*, and that the compleating and continuance of that Covenant-relation did neceſſarily and indiſpenſably require their own faith and repentance, ſo ſoon as grown up to a capacity inabling them thereunto, whence, as ſuch, who in their Infancy had a right to, and intereſt in the Covenant, and Promiſes thereof, either by vertue of their relation to *Abraham*, as his natural Seed, thus, in reſpect of his own immediate Children, or by vertue of the relation to Covenant-parents, thus

thus, in respect of the Jews mediately deseended from *Abraham*, during the first Testament administration; I say, as such, might, when grown up to years of maturity, fail in the performing the conditions of the Covenant, and thereupon be rejected of God; so they having lost their own Covenant-state and relation, could not convey a right to, or interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof to their Children, their Childrens Covenant state and relation standing or falling with their own; whence it is evident, that as neither the Jews themselves, as grown up, and as Parents, had any right to the Covenant, as administred under the first Testament, but what depended upon their personal exceptance and performance of the conditions of the Covenant, as then proposed to, and administred among them, nor their Infant-seed any right of admission into a participation of the benefits and blessings of the Covenant, as then administred, but upon a supposition of their immediate Parents abiding in Covenant; so now the continuance of their right (considered as grown up and as Parents) to the Covenant and blessings thereof, as now varied and altered in its administration, depended upon their acceptation and performance of the conditions of the Covenant, as now proposed under this present administration, and as the continuance of their own right to the Covenant, and the privileges thereof, depended upon their own acceptation and performance of the Covenant, as now administred, so their Childrens

right

right to, and interest in the Covenant, and privileges thereof, stood or fell with their own; and hence the Jews, as grown up to years of maturity, or as Parents, refusing to accept of and perform the Conditions of the Covenant, as now differently administred under the New Testament, from what it was under the Old, were personally rejected, supposing them single persons, and were both themselves and their Children (supposing their Children were in their Infancy) rejected from their standing any longer in their former Covenant-state and relation God-ward: So that this Supposition having no footing in any thing I have hitherto said, the Objection it self, so far as grounded upon it, no way concerns the truth asserted in the one or the other foregoing Propositions, and consequently I am not at all concerned to reply unto it.

Now for the other Proposition this Objection is grounded upon, I acknowledge my self concerned in it, and do freely grant, yea, positively affirm, That the Infant-seed of believing Gentiles are to be accounted of, and numbred among *Abraham*'s mystical Seed: what respect we have to that their mystical relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed, in the application of Baptism to them, will be more fitly considered under the last Proposition: But that they are to be accounted of, and numbred among *Abraham*'s mystical Seed, I affirm, and it sufficiently appears from hence, *viz.* That *Abraham*'s Seed in their gene-

generations make up but one mystical Seed; This is evident from *Gen.* 17. 7. where saith the Lord, *I establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee in their genenerations, to be a God to thee, and thy Seed after thee*: So that Seed in their generations is expounded by God himself to be, *Seed after thee*; Seed in their generations makes up that one Seed: and to the same purpose is that of the Apostle, in *Gal.* 3. 16. *He saith not, To Seeds, as of many, but, To thy Seed, which is Christ.* Whence it appears, that all the individual and particular persons, whether grown up, or Infants, that are included in that Promise, as made to *Abraham*, with reference to his Seed, make up but one Seed, *which*, saith the Apostle, *is Christ.* Now that the Infant-seed of believing Gentiles, under the Gospel administration, as well as the Infant-seed of the Jews, under the first Testament administration, are included with their Parents in that phrase, *Thy Seed in their generations*, hath been abundantly proved already: so that I say I grant, yea affirm, that the Infant-seed of believing Gentiles are to be reckoned of, and numbred among *Abraham*'s mystical Seed.

Object. 1. First, That the Scripture still makes Faith the condition, or medium, of Gentiles becoming *Abraham*'s mystical Seed, *Rom.* 4. 12, 16. Whence it seems evident, that *Abraham* is a mystical Father to none but Believers, and his Seed are only such as are of the Faith.

Answ.

Answ. I answer, The Scripture is not contrary to it self: Now we have seen, that under that phrase, *Thy Seed in their generations*, the Infant-seed both of Jews and Gentiles are included; and that this, *Seed in their generations*, is but *Abraham*'s Seed after him: Whence it is evident, the Apostle in saying, that *Abraham* is the Father of them that believe, excludes not, but on the other hand includes the Infant-seed of such as do believe, as to be accounted with their Parents, as making up but one Seed; he is the Father of them that do believe, whether Jews or Gentiles in their generations.

Object. 2. Secondly, It is objected, That then we make three parties in the Covenant.

First, *Abraham.*

Secondly, His Seed.

Thirdly, Their Infant-seed.

Answ. In answer, We make but two parties, *Abraham*, and his Seed, the Infant-seed of Believers makes not a third party, but stands in the same capacity, respective to *Abraham*, that their Parents do, and he is to be looked upon as a common Father to Parents, and their Infant-seed, the several individuals, whether Parents or Infants, are all but the several members or parts of that one *totum*, that one collective body, *Abraham*'s Seed: from all it appears, that this Objection, in part, concerns not me, and so far as it doth concern me, is no way opposite to what I have affirmed, but is granted

granted without the leaſt prejudice to the truth pleaded for.

Object. 3. It is objected by ſome, That Infants cannot be under the Covenant of Grace, becauſe the Covenant of Grace promiſeth divine teachings to all that are under it, the iſſue of which is the ſaving knowledge of God, which as Infants for the preſent are incapable of; ſo it is certain, that many of the Infants of Believers are never made partakers of; now if they are admitted into Covenant, and are actually under the Promiſes of it, they muſt needs be taught of God, and that ſo as to know him, at leaſt they would, as they grow up to a capacity, be ſo taught of God; ſee the Promiſe, *Iſa.* 54. 15. *Jer.* 31. 34. *Heb.* 8. 10.

Anſw. I anſwer, This Objection hath been removed already, but yet for further ſatisfaction I ſhall lay down theſe two Propoſitions.

Fiaſt, That ſome may be actually in the Covenant of Grace, who yet are not ſo taught of God, as ſavingly to know him: this might be evidenced from that diſtinction formerly laid down, concerning an external and internal being in Covenant: It is poſſible, perſons may be, yea, it is certain many are, externally in Covenant, who are not internally in Covenant; the neceſſity of this diſtinction hath been already ſhewed, and the abſurdities that would follow, in caſe it ſhould be denied, declared. Now in reſpect

respect of such who are only external in Covenant, it is certain, though they are in Covenant, and under the promises of it, according to its true tenour, as so externally made, yet are not so taught of God, as savingly to know him, for then they would be, not only externally, but internally in Covenant.

Secondly, That this Promise made to the Covenant-people of God, assuring them, that they shall be all, from the least to the greatest, taught of God, so as savingly to know him, doth not infallibly secure the good promised to every individual person, to whom the promise, as externally promulgated and declared, doth, in common with others appertain.

And for the proof of this Position I would argue thus, If it do infallibly secure the good promised to every individual person to whom it doth externally appertain, it must be either by vertue of the universality of the terms, or by vertue of the nature and kind of the promise it self, or by vertue of the nature or quality of the good promised. That it is by vertue of the nature or quality of the good promised none can pretend, and that it is neither of the former wayes I shall prove distinctly.

First, That it cannot be by vertue of the universality of the terms in which the promise is expreſt, is evident thus, because indefinite promises may be, and many times are expreſt in universal terms, and then, though the terms be

universal, yet the promises may not be made good to every individual person, to whom, in common with others, they do appertain; *If I be list up*, saith Christ, *I will draw all men to me*, *John* 12. 32. The terms are universal, yet the promise is an indefinite promise, he would draw many unto him. So again, *Acts* 2. 17. *I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh*: where we see again the terms are universal, yet the promise is verified only in some particular persons.

But here you will say, In this place the promise is expresst with a peculiar emphasis, *They shall all know me, from the least to the greatest*; and therefore it must needs be understood universally.

To that I answer, Whether we understand this phrase, *From the least to the greatest*, of age, or state, or condition, is not much to our present purpose; we find the very same phrase used, when yet the sence is only indefinite, thus, *Jer.* 6. 13. *From the least to the greatest, every one is given to covetousness*; which yet was not universally true of every individual person among that people, whether Infant or grown person, nor of every individual grown person, it only notes the mighty, and almost universal corruption of that people in point of Covetousness. So that every individual person, externally in the Covenant of Grace, and so in common with others, having this promise appertaining to them, shall be savingly taught of God, so as truly to know

know him, cannot be inferred, or certainly concluded from the universality of the terms it is expressed in.

Secondly, Nor from the nature of the promise; for if the nature of the promise do infallibly secure the good promised to every individual person in covenant, as before expressed, it must be either, as it is a conditional, or as it is an absolute promise; as it is conditional, it cannot be pretended, in as much as no conditional promises, as such, do infallibly secure the good promised to any to whom they do appertain; it is possible the condition may not be performed, and then God is disobliged from making good the promises.

It is true, you will say, supposing it were a conditional promise, it would not infallibly secure the good promised to all universally, to whom it doth appertain; but it is an absolute promise, and the absoluteness of the promise, taken in conjunction with the universality of the terms, doth sure infallibly secure the good promised to all universally to whom it doth appertain.

I answer, That the promise, though here expressed absolutely, yet is not absolutely absolute, as before proved; so though expressed in universal terms, yet may be and is an indefinite promise, indefinite promises being often expressed in universal terms; yea, let me say, that absolute pro-

mises, how universally soever their terms are, are yet to be always understood in an indefinite notion, and the good promised is not infallibly secured to any individual or particular person, merely by the promises themselves, but only upon supposition of the eternal purposes and decrees of God, to give the good so promised to this or that particular person: in respect of absolute promises, God hath reserved a liberty to himself, to give or withhold the good promised, in a commensurableness to his eternal decrees and purposes, and according as particular persons are elected and appointed to the enjoyment of the good promised, or not elected or passed by.

From all it evidently appears, that persons may have a visible and external actual right and title to this promise, and yet never have the good promised in present possession, nor yet ever have it made good to them, and consequently it cannot be concluded from the absoluteness or universality of this promise, that the Infant-seed of believing Parents are not in the Covenant of Grace, nor under the promises of it.

But let that suffice for our second subordinate Proposition.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

The third ſubordinate Propoſition laid down; how handled declared. The firſt Argument for its confirmation propoſed and proſecuted, where that Command, concerning the keeping of the Covenant, Gen. 17. 9. is largely ſpoken to.

I Come now to the third and laſt ſubordinate Propoſition, *viz.*

That all thoſe that are under, or are the actual Subjects of that Promiſe, wherein God ingaged himſelf to be a God to Abraham, and his Seed in their Generations, ought, according to the will of Chriſt, to be baptized: all that are the Subjects of that Promiſe are the due and proper Subjects of Baptiſm: There may be, in true, a tender of the Promiſe to ſuch who ought not to be baptized, they may refuſe that tender, but to whom the Promiſe doth actually belong, the Ordinance of Baptiſme ought, according to the will of Chriſt, to be applyed.

This Proposition I shall endeavour to prove in *hypothesi*, or as applied to the particular subject of our main Proposition, *viz.* the Infant-seed of one or both believing Parents; and thus supposing, and taking it for granted (as being already proved) that they are the actual Subjects of that Promise, I shall prove that they ought, according to the will of Christ, to be baptised, and that by these three Arguments,

First, If it be the duty of believing Parents, not only to be baptized themselves, but to take care that their Infant-seed, as joynt Subjects with themselves of that promise, be also baptized, then it is according to the will of Christ, that not only believing Parents themselves, but their Infant-seed also should be baptized; but the former is true, therefore the latter.

The Consequence in the Major proposition is unquestionable, what a Believer is bound to take care be done, the doing of that must undoubtedly be according to the will of Christ.

But 'tis the Minor proposition will be denied, *viz.* That it is the duty of believing Parents, not only to be baptized themselves, but to take care that their Infant-Seed, as joynt Subjects with themselves of the same promise, be baptized.

But the truth of this is evident from the express Command of God, *Gen.* 17. 9. *And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations.*

Now

Now that it may appear, that this Command doth constitute it to be the duty of believing *Parents*, not only to be baptized themselves, but to take care that their Infant seed be also baptized, I shall distinctly speak to these five things.

First, That by Covenant in this place is mainly, if not only meant, the Token of the Covenant, and by keeping the Covenant, the application and reception of that Token.

Secondly, That the Covenant that *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, were, or were to be received into, alwayes had and was to have a Token annexed to it.

Thirdly, That this Command requiring *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, to keep the Covenant, obliges not only Parents to have the Token applyed to themselves or themselves to receive and bear it, but to apply or take care that it be applyed, according to divine appointment, to their Infant-seed.

Fourthly, That as Circumcision was the Token of the Covenant during the old Testament administration, so Baptism is the Token of the Covenant under the New.

Lastly, That this Command doth equally and alike oblige believing Parents in their Generations, respective to Baptism, the present

Token of the Covenant, as it did the Jews, respective to Circumcision, the then Token of the Covenant.

For the first, That is past all rational doubt evident; God himself shews what he intended by Covenant, and what by keeping of that Covenant; When he applyes this Command, as more generally laid down to *Abraham* and his natural Seed in particular, verse 10. So verse 13. *My Covenant shall be in your flesh*, plainly declaring, that by Covenant he intended the Token of the Covenant, and by keeping of this Covenant, the application and reception of that Token, though not affirming Circumcision to be the only Covenant to be kept, and consequently not limiting the Command to it.

And here let us a little inquire into the sence and meaning of this term *Token*; the Hebrew אות is usually translated by the Seventy σημεῖον, both the Hebrew and Greek signifie, *Signum tam nudum quam prodigiosum*, a sign both ordinary and prodigious, and so is exprest by the Apostle, *Rom.* 4. 11. σημεῖον ἔλαβε περιτομῆς and Sign or token here we are to take in a pure logical notion, and thus we may define it with *Austen*, to be, *Id quod seipsum sensui & preter se aliquid animo representat*: Or as a later Author, *Signum est quod seipsum sensibus & id cujus signum est intellectui aufert*: A Sign in this logical notion is, that which is obvious to, or perceivable by sence, and through the medium

of

of ſence preſents to the mind or underſtanding what it is a ſign of: Whence it is evident, that this term, *Token or Sign*, is not expreſſive of all the uſes or ends that the Token of the Covenant here commanded was deſigned or appointed to; the term abſtractly taken, only expreſſes the general nature and deſign of that Ordinance, but expreſſes not the various uſes and ends it was in particular appointed to; what theſe uſes and ends are, muſt be gathered from other Scriptures, wherein God himſelf hath declared them, of which I ſhall ſpeak when I come to the fourth *Particular*.

But let that ſuffice in brief for the firſt particular to be ſpoken to.

Secondly, That the Covenant that *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, were, or were to be received into, always had, and was to have a Token annexed to it; that is, it had, and was to have an outward Ordinance or Inſtitution annexed unto the adminiſtration of it, which though of various uſes, and ſerving to various ends, not expreſly declared in that term *Token*, abſtractly taken, yet might be denominated the Token of the Covenant. This is evident two wayes.

First, *A priori*, from the Command of God, injoyning *Abraham*'s Seed in their Generations to keep it.

Secondly, *A poſteriori*, or *de facto*, from the actual

actual institution and appointment of such a Token.

For the first, Let the words in *Gen.* 17. 9. be diligently observed, *And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt therefore keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations.* Now God would never have injoyned *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, to keep his Covenant, that is, the Token of it, had he not intended to annex a Token to it. And observe it, the Command lyes on *Abraham*'s Seed in their Generations, without any limitation, and consequently is incumbent upon *Abraham*'s Seed, while he hath a Seed upon earth. Hence it is evident, that as God intended to annex a Token to that Covenant, then entred with *Abraham* and his natural Seed, so he intended to annex a Token to his Covenant (whether the same, or another, it is all one as to our present purpose) into which *Abraham*'s spiritual Seed, *viz.* believing Gentiles, in after Ages should be received; we see the Command lyes upon *Abraham*'s Seed in their Generations unlimitedly.

Now Believers under the new Testament, as hath been proved, are *Abraham*'s Seed, and consequently must needs lye under the Obligation of this Command, whence there must needs be a Token annexed to the Covenant into which they are received, for otherwise they would lye under an Obligation to keep the Token of the Covenant, and yet have no Token appointed them

them by God, to keep which would be abſurd: And that this Command is obliging to *Abraham*'s myſtical or ſpiritual Seed, is evident by this Argument.

The ſame perſons intended in the Promiſes of the Covenant, are intended in the Command, injoyning the Token: But *Abraham*'s myſtical Seed, as well as his natural Seed, are intended in the Promiſes; therefore they are alſo intended in the Command.

We evidently ſee, the Promiſes and the Command run in one and the ſame extent and latitude; *I will eſtabliſh my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee in their Generations, to be a God to thee and thy Seed after thee*, there's the Promiſe: *Thou ſhalt therefore keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations*, there's the Command.

Now if God hath not limited the Command to ſome of *Abraham*'s Seed, then we muſt not do it: But God hath no where limited the Command to ſome of *Abraham*'s Seed; therefore muſt not we.

If any ſhould ſay, He hath limited that Command.

Let that limitation be produced, and it ſhall ſuffice; till then we ſhall conclude, the Command is of an equal extent with the Promiſe.

Now

Now there being a Command incumbent upon *Abraham*'s whole Seed mystical, as well as natural, to keep the Covenant, that is, as God himself expounds it, the Token of the Covenant, there must needs be a Token to be kept.

Secondly, This is evident, *de facto*, for the Covenant under the first Testament administration that will not be denyed, and for the Covenant under the new Testament administration, the truth of what I affirm will appear, when I come to shew that Baptism is the present Token of the Covenant.

And therefore thirdly, That this Command, requiring *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, to keep the Covenant, obliges not only Parents to have the Token of the Covenant applyed unto themselves, or themselves to receive and bear it, but also to apply or take care that it be applyed to their Infant-seed. The truth of this will again appear two wayes.

First, From the Letter of the Command, *Thou shalt therefore keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed in their Generations.* Now under this phrase, *thy Seed in their Generations*, both Parents and their Infant-seed are included; they are both included in the Promise, as hath been already proved, and therefore must needs be both included in the Command injoyning the keeping of the Covenant. Hence, that the Covenant

be

be kept by the Seed as well as by the *Parents* themselves, is according to the expreſs letter of the Command; which duty of keeping, as to be performed by the Infant-ſeed, can only intend their reception and bearing of it; and ſo far the Infant-Seed as well as the *Parents* are under the Obligation of the Command: hence an Infant, not receiving or bearing the Token of the Covenant, is ſaid to have broken the Covenant, verſe 14, becauſe the Infants as well as the *Parents* are under the Obligation of the Command to keep the Covenant.

Now if ſo be the Covenant be to be kept, not only by *Parents*, but by their Infant-ſeed, it will undeniably follow, that *Parents* are to take care that it be kept by them, in as much as they, as ſuch, are incapable of taking care of it themſelves, the care muſt lye upon ſome body, and upon whom, if not upon their *Parents*? We ſee that God hath throughout the Scripture made it the duty of *Parents* to take care of, and ſee to the performance of his will relating to their children, as might be evidenced in variety of inſtances were it needful.

Secondly, The truth of this appears from the clear and expreſs diſcovery that God made of his mind and will as to *Circumciſion*, the ancient Token of the *Covenant*, and thus as God injoyned the token of the Covenant to be applyed to the Infant-ſeed of *Covenant*-parents, ſo he impoſed the care of the application of that Token unto the Seed upon the *Parents*, *Every man-child*

child among you shall be circumcised, verse 10. *He that is eight days old, shall be circumcised among you*, verse 12. The Child in the application of the Token was passive, and though upon whom the care of the application of the Token to the Infant-seed was laid, is not expresly declared in this place, yet that it was upon the Parents is sufficiently evident throughout the Scripture. We see how angry God was with *Moses*, when the circumcision of his Child was neglected; and in that God so fully declared his mind in respect of Circumcision, the then Token of the Covenant, it is a full comment upon the Command, as more generally laid down, *viz.* That as in that phrase, *Thy Seed in their Generations*, he intended both Parents and Infant-seed; so that the care of the Childs receiving and bearing the Token of the Covenant (which is the whole of its keeping of it) did appertain to the Parents as their duty.

And hence let it be observed, that the will of God concerning Circumcision, shews us what is his will concerning Baptism, that as the one, so the other should be applyed to the Infants of believing Parents, as well as to the Parents themselves, and that the care of the application of the one, as well as of the other, lyes upon the Parents.

Where note, that I argue not from Anallogy, but only take that discovery God makes of his will concerning Circumcision, as a comment upon that Command injoyning the keeping of the Covenant, as more generally laid down.

But

But not to inlarge upon this, by what hath been ſaid the truth of the third particular ſufficiently appears.

Fourthly, That as Circumciſion was the Sign or Token of the Covenant, during the old Teſtament adminiſtration, ſo Baptiſm is the Sign or Token of the Covenant under the new Teſtament adminiſtration. Where note, that when I ſay, Circumciſion was, and Baptiſm is, the Sign or Token of the Covenant, I would be thus underſtood, *viz.* that Circumciſion was, and Baptiſm is, that Ordinance or Inſtitution that God then did annex, and now hath annexed to the Covenant, ſerving to, and performing of thoſe various uſes and ends, with reference unto thoſe to whom it was, and is to be applyed, that he propoſed to himſelf, as the reaſon and ground of his annexing a Sign or Token in the general to the Covenant eſtabliſhed betwixt himſelf and *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations.

That Circumciſion was this Ordinance or Inſtitution, is expreſly declared, *Genes.* 17. 10, 11.

That Baptiſm is the preſent Sign or Token of the Covenant will appear theſe two wayes.

First, More generally, and thus: Unleſs Baptiſm be the preſent Sign or Token of the Covenant, the Covenant, during this preſent adminiſtration, is left wholly deſtitute of any Sign or

of Token at all; let the Sign or Token be produced in case Baptism be not it.

'Tis true, it may be it will be said, That the Covenant under the present administration, hath no external Sign or Token annexed to it, neither is it necessary that it should; the Spirit is the Seal of the Covenant of Grace, and the more plentiful powrings forth of the Spirit upon Believers, especially under that notion of a Seal, makes an outward Sign or Token wholly unnecessary.

To that I answer:

First, That though Believers are said to be sealed with the Spirit, yet the Spirit is no where called the Seal of the Covenant, neither indeed can it in propriety of speech be so called; for if the Spirit were the Seal of the Covenant, it should be given to all that are under the Covenant, the contrary thereunto both Scripture and experience abundantly declare, the Seal of the Covenant must be as extensive as the Covenant whereof it is the Seal. Now take the Spirit as a Seal, that is, as given for that particular use and end, *viz.* to assure and ascertain the Subject recipient of it, of the good promised in the Covenant, and so it is certain he is not given to every one truly and internally in covenant for a long time, not to some possibly while they live. How many live many years, and it may be at last dye without any sensible assurance of their covenant-state, or injoyment of the

the good promised, so that the Spirit cannot properly be called the Seal of the Covenant; he is rather (as I may so express it) a private Seal given by God to this or that particular Believer, according to the good pleasure of his own will.

Secondly, I answer, That to seal and assure to those who are admitted into covenant with God, their injoyment of the good promised is not the only use and end, with reference whereunto the Sign or Token of the Covenant is appointed.

Hence suppose it should be granted, that the Spirit is the Seal, yea, the only Seal of the Covenant of Grace, yet that doth no way oppose the truth of what we here affirm concerning Baptism; for though it should be not to that particular use, nor appointed for that special end which yet it is, as will appear by and by, yet it may be the Sign or Token of the Covenant, it may be of those other uses, and serve to those other ends that God did propound to himself, as the reason and ground of his ordaining a Sign or Token in the general, to the Covenant; so that it is certain, the Spirit cannot be rationally supposed to be that Sign or Token of the Covenant, which *Abraham*'s Seed in their Generations were injoyned to keep; and consequently, for ought what is said of the Spirit, unless Baptism be the present Token of the Covenant, it is wholly destitute of any Sign or Token at all, which that it cannot be, hath been

proved already: as for the Lords Supper, I suppose, none will ever imagine that that can be the Token here injoyned, if they should, their vanity will easily appear.

Secondly, This will more clearly appear, if we compare Baptism with Circumcision, the former Token of the Covenant: that Circumcision was the Token of the Covenant is unquestionable; and hence look what Ordinance under the new Testament doth most fully agree with Circumcision, in regard of the uses and ends, which, as the Token of the Covenant, it was appointed for, and did serve unto, that must needs be the Ordinance designed by our Lord Christ, for the Token of the Covenant, upon the cessation of Circumcision: And here for the evidencing what is affirmed, I shall do these two things.

1. Instance in some of the more especial uses and ends whereunto Circumcision was appointed, and whereunto it, as the Sign of the Covenant, did serve.

2. Shew the exact agreement of Baptism with Circumcision, in regard of those uses and ends: Where let it be carefully observed, that it is no way necessary, for the proving Baptism to be the present Sign or Token of the Covenant, that I should prove an exact agreement between it and Circumcision in all circumstances, nor yet in regard of all the uses or ends of the

the one and of the other; if it be evident, that their agreement be such as will evidence Baptism to be the Token of the Covenant, upon the cessation of Circumcision, it is enough as to my present purpose, and that may be sufficiently evident by their agreement in some things, though they should disagree in others, especially there being no other Ordinance that can with any shew of reason be pretended to be that Token, the application and reception of which is here enjoyned *Abraham*'s Seed in their Generations; a little may suffice to prove, that Baptism is that Ordinance, when there is no other Ordinance that can, with any shew of probability, be supposed to be it.

I shall therefore only instance in a fourfold use and end, whereunto Circumcision, as the Sign and Token of the Covenant, was appointed, and whereunto it did serve; and then shew the agreement of Baptism with Circumcision, in regard of those uses and ends. The first and two last I shall do little more than mention, and a little insist upon the second.

First, Circumcision, as the Sign and Token of the Covenant, was the solemn Rite or Ordinance, whereby persons were admitted into, and incorporated in the Jewish Church, and by the reception of which they became actual Members of that Church, and consequently was that solemn Rite or Ordinance, whereby persons were incorporated in, and united to the mystical Body of Christ as visible: The proving of

this, I ſuppoſe, is needleſs, 'twill ſurely be denyed by none. And therefore,

Secondly, Circumciſion was to ſeal and aſſure to the Subjects of it, their enjoyment of the good things, benefits and bleſſings promiſed in, according to the true tenour of, the Covenant, to the adminiſtration of which it was annexed: See this in a particular Inſtance, *viz.* Remiſſion of ſin, or the Righteouſneſs which is of Faith: Circumciſion was a Seal of the Righteouſneſs of Faith, that is, it did ſeal and aſſure, to the due Subjects of it, the non-imputation of their ſin, or the imputation of righteouſneſs to them, upon condition of their Faith. Thus it is ſaid of *Abraham*, *He received the ſign of Circumciſion, a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith, which he had being yet uncircumciſed*, Rom. 4. 11. The Apoſtle here ſhews us one ſpecial uſe and end of Circumciſion, reſpective to all to whom it was duly applyed.

Object. But here it is objected, That to have Circumciſion a Seal of the Righteouſneſs of Faith, was a priviledge peculiar to *Abraham* the Father of the faithful, and was not of that uſe, nor appointed for that end, to all to whom it was rightfully applyed: therefore it is ſaid, *He received the ſign of Circumciſion, a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith, that he might be the Father of all that believe.* And hence it may ſeem, that he receiving Circumciſion under that notion and conſideration, upon a reaſon and ground peculiar and

and proper to himſelf, the priviledge was peculiar and proper to him, and not common to any other with him, there not being the ſame reaſon and ground of their receiving of it under the ſame notion and conſideration.

To that I anſwer two things.

Firſt, Thoſe words, *That he might be the Father of all them that believe*, depend not only upon the words immediately foregoing, but upon the tenth verſe taken in conjunction with the former part of v. 11. he did not only receive Circumciſion as a Seal, that he might be the Father of all them that believe, but he both had righteouſneſs imputed to him while in uncircumciſion, and alſo received the Sign of Circumciſion as a Seal, that he might be the Father of them that ſhould believe, whether circumciſed or uncircumciſed: So that he did not receive Circumciſion, as a Seal of the righteouſneſs of faith, upon any reaſon peculiar and ſpecial to himſelf, any more than he had righteouſneſs imputed to him, upon a reaſon peculiar and proper to himſelf: And conſequently, upon the ſame account that our Oppoſites appropriate circumciſion as a Seal of the righteouſneſs of faith to *Abraham* himſelf, and deny it to be of the ſame uſe to his Seed, they may appropriate the imputation of Righteouſneſs through Faith and Circumciſion it ſelf to him alone, and deny that any of his Seed had Righteouſneſs imputed unto them, or ought to have been circumciſed.

Secondly, I answer, That the Apostle here rather speaks of the *finis cui*, than the *finis cujus* of *Abraham*'s receiving Circumcision as a Seal: My meaning is this, *Abraham* received circumcision as a Seal, not barely for the sake of that relation of his being a Father of them that should believe, as it was a good benefit or priviledge to himself, but he received it under that notion and consideration, *In eorum gratiam qui credituri sint*, for their sake to whom he should sustain the relation of a Father: And so the meaning is, He received the Sign of Circumcision as a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, not barely that he might sustain the relation of a Father to all that should believe, as that was a good to himself, but that he might as a Father, or common person, be a pattern to all that should sustain that relation of Children to him, in regard of the good which they, as his Children, should receive.

Now then having removed this Objection, I shall offer two or three Arguments to prove, that Circumcision was appointed for this use and end. *viz.* to seal and confirm the whole Covenant to all to whom it was, according to the will of God, to be applyed.

The first shall be taken from the end of *Abraham*'s receiving of it, as here declared by the Apostle: And thus I argue, If *Abraham* received Circumcision, as a Seal of the Righteousness which he had through Faith, that he might be the Father of, and as the Father of a

pattern

pattern to all that being circumciſed ſhould believe, then to all that, being circumciſed, did believe, their circumciſion was and ought to be looked upon and improved by them, as a Seal of that Righteouſneſs they had through Faith: *But* the former is true, therefore the latter. For the Conſequence in the Major propoſition, I ſuppoſe, that will not be denyed, it being paſt all rational doubt, that if *Abraham* received Circumciſion under that very notion and conſideration as a Seal, that he might be the Father of, and as the Father of, might be a pattern to all that, being circumciſed, ſhould believe as he did: Then look of what uſe it was to him, or to what end he received it; it muſt needs be of the ſame uſe, and appointed for the ſame end unto them, to whom he was a pattern as receiving it. And therefore 'tis only the Antecedent that can be queſtioned, which yet is ſo evident, that to underſtanding and unprejudiced perſons the proving of it may ſeem wholly ſuperfluous. That *Abraham* received Circumciſion under this very notion, as a Seal of the righteouſneſs which he had through faith, that he might be the Father of all them who being circumciſed did believe, is expreſly affirmed by the Apoſtle; all that can be doubted of is, whether he was, in regard of the uſe and end of it, as received by himſelf, a pattern to all to whom he was a Father: *But* now this is undeniable, in as much as his paternity or fatherhood, as I may ſo ſpeak, in part, if not principally, conſiſted in his being a pattern and example to

all to whom he was a Father. This title of a Father is in a peculiar and ſpecial manner given to, and predicated of *Abraham*, in this very regard, that he was ſet up as the great pattern, according to which God would act towards, and deal with, all that ſhould after believe, or be admitted into a covenant-relation with himſelf: Hence in this very place the Apoſtle tells us, that faith was reckoned to *Abraham* for righteouſneſs, which is all one as to ſay, righteouſneſs was imputed to him through faith, when he was in uncircumciſion, that he might be the Father of the uncircumciſed, that righteouſneſs might be imputed to them alſo, *viz.* according to the pattern ſet in *Abraham* himſelf.

So again, *Gal* 3.7. *Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteouſneſs.* Mark, the deſign of the Apoſtle is to prove, that righteouſneſs is through faith, from the firſt pattern ſet in *Abraham*. Now ſayes he, verſe 7. *Know ye therefore, that they which are of the faith are the children of Abraham*; and then cloſes, verſe 9. *So then they which are of faith, are bleſſed with faithful Abraham*; that is, as they are bleſſed with him with the ſame bleſſings, ſo they are bleſſed with him after the ſame manner, *viz.* through faith. Now as *Abraham* had righteouſneſs imputed to him through faith, that he might be the Father of all that believe, and, as a Father, a pattern to them, in regard of the imputation of righteouſneſs: So he received Circumciſion as a Seal of

that

that righteouſneſs, that he might be the Father of them that ſhould believe of the circumciſion, and, as a Father, a pattern to them, in regard of the uſe and end of Circumciſion, which both he and they in common received: So that it is evident, that Circumciſion was of that uſe, and appointed for that end, *viz.* to be a Seal of the righteouſneſs of faith, not only to *Abraham* himſelf, but to all his Seed, during the continuance of that inſtitution.

Secondly, That Circumciſion was of this uſe, and appointed for this end, with reference to the temporal benefits promiſed in the Covenant, is evident from hence, becauſe it could be of no other uſe, nor appointed for any other end, with reference to ſome of them. Hence I argue, If Circumciſion had ſome reference to the temporal good things promiſed in the Covenant, it was annexed to, and could have no other reference or reſpect but as a Seal, aſſuring the injoyment of them, then that muſt needs be its uſe and end, with reference to thoſe good things promiſed: but the former is true, therefore the latter.

The Conſequence in the Major propoſition cannot be denyed, for if Circumciſion had ſome reference to the temporal good things promiſed in the Covenant, and it could have no other reference, but as a Seal or Sign aſſuring the injoyment of them, then that muſt needs be its uſe and end reſpective unto them, this will not be denyed.

Secondly,

Secondly, For the Antecedent, that conſiſts of two branches.

First, That Circumciſion had ſome reference to, or was of ſome uſe, and appointed for ſome end, reſpective to the temporal good promiſed; this is evident from the indefiniteneſs of the expreſſion, *The Token of my Covenant*; 'twas the Token of the Covenant abſolutely taken, not of ſome part of the Covenant, but of the whole Covenant, and therefore muſt needs in its uſe and end have ſome reference to the whole good promiſed in the Covenant: But this, I ſuppoſe, will be granted by our Oppoſers, they generally affirming, that the ſpecial, if not the only uſe and end of Circumciſion, did refer and relate to the temporal part of the Covenant, or to the Covenant as it was a temporal Covenant,

And therefore ſecondly, That it could have no other reference, or could be of no other uſe, with reference to theſe Promiſes, but only this, *viz.* To ſeal or aſſure the injoyment of the good promiſed: Take it of the Land of *Canaan*, for what uſe, and to what end could Circumciſion be inſtituted, reſpective to that Promiſe, but to ſeal or aſſure the injoyment of the good promiſed, upon condition of the obſervation of the Articles of the Covenant? Whence the Concluſion is undeniable,: So that, I ſay, Circumciſion was the Seal of the whole Covenant, we ſee it:

First, In reſpect of the ſpiritual good promiſed, as pardon of ſin, the righteouſneſs of faith.

Secondly,

Secondly, In reſpect of the temporal good promiſed; and that Circumciſion did ſeal the temporal part of the Covenant, is not only evident from Scripture and Reaſon, but is the general acknowledgment of our Oppoſers themſelves; therefore I ſhall take it for granted, and upon that Suppoſition infer a third Argument, to prove that it was of that uſe, and appointed for that end, *viz.* To be a Seal, or an aſſuring Sign of the whole good, whether temporall or ſpirituall convey'd, and made over by the Covenant, and conſequently was a Seal of the Covenant abſolutely taken. And therefore,

Thirdly, If Circumciſion, as the Token of the Covenant, was a Seal of ſome Promiſes contained in it, then it was a Seal of all the Promiſes of it: But the former is true, therefore the latter.

That this Covenant, now entred with *Abraham* and his Seed, was a ſpiritual as well as a temporal Covenant, or did conſiſt of ſpiritual as well as temporal Promiſes, hath been already proved. Now that Circumciſion was the Token of the Covenant, is expreſly affirmed by God himſelf, *This is the Token of my Covenant*; and that as the Token it was of that uſe, and appointed for that end, with reference to the temporal part of the Covenant, hath been before proved, and is granted by our Oppoſers, and therefore muſt needs be of that uſe, and appointed for that end, reſpective to all the Promiſes of the Covenant: *Ubi lex non diſtinguit*

non diſtinguendum eſt, Let any reaſon be ſhewed why it ſhould not be a Seal, or an aſſuring Sign, of the ſpiritual part of the Covenant, as well as of the temporal part, till which be done, the indefiniteneſs of its reference to the whole Covenant, expreſt by that indefinite phraſe, *The Token of my Covenant*, is an undoubted warrant to take it, as of the ſame uſe, and appointed for the ſame end, reſpective to all the Promiſes of the Covenant, that it was to any: from all we ſee, that Circumciſion was a Seal, or an aſſuring Sign or Token; and that's the ſecond uſe and end of Circumciſion, the former Token of the Covenant.

Thirdly, The uſe and end of Circumciſion was, to oblige and ingage the perſon receiving of it to keep exactly to the Articles of this Covenant; hence is that paſſage, *Jer.* 4. 4. *Circumciſe your ſelves to the Lord*: But this, I ſuppoſe, is granted on all hands, I ſhall not at all ſtand upon it.

Fourthly and laſtly, The uſe and end of Circumciſion was, to be a viſible badge, to diſtinguiſh the people of God from all other people, and to be a viſible Sign of their covenant-relation, or to be a Sign, whereby they did viſibly appear to belong to God in Chriſt, in a contradiſtinction from the reſt of the world.

Secondly, That Baptiſm doth agree with Circumciſion, in regard of theſe uſes and ends, is

is ſufficiently evident, and conſequently muſt needs be the Sign and Token of the Covenant here injoyned, ſince the laying aſide of Circumciſion: Let us ſee it in the particulars.

Firſt, For the firſt uſe and end of Circumciſion, *viz.* Its being that ſolemn Rite and Ordinance, by which perſons were admitted into, and incorporated in the Church, or myſtical Body of Chriſt, as viſible: That Baptiſm is of this uſe, and appointed for this end, is expreſly declared by the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 12. 13.

Secondly, For the ſecond uſe and end of Circumciſion, *viz.* to aſſure the party to whom it was applyed, of the injoyment of the good things, benefits and bleſſings promiſed in the Covenant. That Baptiſm is of this uſe, is ſufficiently evident from that paſſage of *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 21. where *Peter* having ſpoken of the ſalvation of *Noah* and his houſe in the Ark, ſayes he, *The like figure whereunto Baptiſm now ſaveth us*, and telleth us how it ſaveth, both negatively and poſitively; negatively, it is *not by waſhing the body from its outward filth*, but poſitively, by giving or effecting *the anſwer of a good conſcience towards God, through the reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead.* What the Apoſtle means by this anſwer of a good conſcience, Interpreters are not agreed, neither doth it concern my preſent purpoſe to determine; that which I only intend is, that by the reſurrection of Chriſt, through a right uſe and improvement made of Baptiſm,

Baptiſm, a believing Soul comes to have a good conſcience, that is, an acquitting conſcience. Now what uſe or improvement can be made of Baptiſm, in order to the cleanſing and purifying the conſcience, by means whereof it becomes good, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, but as it is looked upon, and applyed as a Seal, or an aſſuring Sign, ſealing and aſſuring to the Soul the remiſſion of ſin, through the purchaſe of Chriſts death, as declared valid and effectual by his riſing from the dead: this uſe and end of Baptiſm is alſo clearly implyed and held forth in the Apoſtles Exhortation to thoſe trembling Jews, *Acts* 2. 38. *Repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt,* εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, *for or unto the remiſſion of ſin.* Now under what notion or conſideration doth the Apoſtle exhort to Baptiſm, reſpective to remiſſion of ſin? It cannot be under the notion of a proper cauſe, for Baptiſm is no proper cauſe of the remiſſion of ſin, neither is it ſo much as a neceſſary condition, as Faith and Repentance in the adult are, for then none could receive remiſſion of ſin without it; but that is falſe, as is evident in the caſe of the Thief upon the croſs, and the like is the caſe of many others, who are converted immediately before death. Neither doth he exhort to it barely under the notion of a Sign, that phraſe, εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, implyes ſome reference that Baptiſm hath to remiſſion of ſin, beyond what it would have, were it only *mudum Signum*, a bare Sign or repreſentation of the remiſſion of ſins by the blood of Chriſt,

and

and therefore he muſt needs exhort to it under the notion of a Seal or aſſuring Sign: And for the further clearing up of this, let the caſe and condition of theſe trembling Jews be conſidered, as they had ſinned in crucifying of Chriſt, and were under the guilt of that ſin, and under an Obligation to ſuffer deſerved puniſhment, ſo they were under a deep ſence of that their ſin, and that wrath or puniſhment due to them upon the account thereof. Now as the Apoſtle exhorts them to repent (with which a ſaving faith in Chriſt muſt be ſuppoſed to concur) with a direct reference to their obtaining remiſſion of ſin, *in foro Dei*; ſo he exhorts them to be baptized, with a peculiar reference to the pacification of their conſciences, that they might not only have remiſſion of ſin in the Court of Heaven, but have that remiſſion ſealed and confirmed to them, to the quieting their afflicted conſciences, or to the working in them good conſciences: But that is a ſecond uſe and end of *Baptiſm*.

Thirdly, For the third uſe and end of *Circumciſion*, *viz.* To oblige and ingage the perſons to whom it was applyed, to a due and faithful performance of all conſequent duties required in the *Covenant*. This is true alſo of *Baptiſm*; *Baptiſm* is not only a ſealing or confirming Sign, but an obliging Sign, by it the perſon baptized is obliged to take God in Chriſt for his God, and give up himſelf to him, in univerſal and conſtant obedience to his will. This is

clearly

clearly held forth in that Proposition of, *Baptism is said to be, εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ, into the Name of the Father*, Matth. 28. 19. *εἰς Χριστὸν, Into Christ*, Gal. 3. 27. But this, I suppose, will be granted on all hands, I need not stand upon it.

Fourthly, For the last use and end of *Circumcision*, *viz.* To be an outward Sign or badge of that covenant-relation the Soul was taken into with God in *Christ*, whereby the person was known and taken notice of, as visibly belonging unto God, as one of his covenant-people. This again is true of *Baptism*; hence those that are baptized are said to put on *Christ*, *Gal.* 3. 27. *As many as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ*, they visibly appear as Members of his mystical *Body*, as contradistinguished from the non-baptized; from all it evidently appears, that *Baptism* is indeed that Ordinance, appointed by our Lord *Christ* under the new Testament, serving to, and performing of those uses and ends, with reference unto which, a Sign or Token in the general was annexed to the Covenant established between God and *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations. But let that suffice for the fourth particular.

Lastly, That this Command doth alike oblige believing Gentiles, respective to *Baptism*, that it did the Jews, respective to *Circumcision*. As it obliged the Jews, during that first Testa-

ment

ment administration, to be circumcised themselves, and see that their Infant seed were circumcised with them; so it doth still oblige believing Parents to be baptized themselves, and see that their Infant-seed be baptized with them: This is evident from the consideration of two things in the Command.

First, The extensiveness of it; it reaches *Abraham*'s Seed in their Generations, as we have afore proved.

Secondly, The applicability of it, as more generally laid down to Baptism, as well as to Circumcision: And for the clearing up of this, let it be carefully observed, that the Command obliging *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, to keep the Covenant, meaning as before noted, the Token of the Covenant, did not at all intimate, much less determine, what that Token should be; it only constitutes the general duty of *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, respective to the Token of the Covenant, whatever that should after be determined by God himself to be: the words are plain and express, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations*; not thou and thy Seed shall be circumcised or baptized, but thou and thy Seed in their Generations shall keep the Covenant: Hence the Command, as thus generally laid down, obligeth no more to the application or reception of circumcision, than to the application or reception

of Baptiſm, and indeed to neither of them, ſimply and abſolutely conſidered; it only enjoyned the application and reception of the Token of the Covenant, but did not determine what that was, or ſhould be; and had God only thus generally and indefinitely commanded the keeping of the Covenant, without ſpecifying what this Covenant ſhould be, for *Abraham* himſelf to have been circumciſed, or to have circumciſed his Seed, had been a Sin and an act of will-worſhip: but now when God had determined Circumciſion to be the then Token of the Covenant, this general Command was to be applyed by him to that inſtitution in particular, and his receiving of it himſelf, and applying it to his Seed, was warranted, yea, injoyned by this Command; ſo then that particular inſtitution of Circumciſion was laid aſide, and *Baptiſm* inſtituted for the ſame uſes & ends: that Command was no longer to be applyed to Circumciſion, but unto *Baptiſm* ſet up in the ſtead of it; and doth equally oblige Chriſtians to the application and reception of *Baptiſm*, as it did the Jews, during the firſt Teſtament adminiſtration, to the application and reception of Circumciſion; the command only injoyning the obſervation of the Token of the Covenant, not determining what that was or ſhould be; as it injoyned of it ſelf neither Circumciſion nor *Baptiſm*, ſo it injoyned both the one and the other, as they were determined by God to be the Token of his Covenant; ſo that we have as an expreſs command, comparing this command with that, *Matth.* 28. 19. for

baptiſm

baptiſme of Infants, as the Jews had for the circumciſing their Infant-ſeed; The command to keep the Covenant lying upon *Abraham*'s Seed in their Generations, which, as I have ſaid, as it injoyned Parents to receive or have the Token of the Covenant applyed unto them, and unto their Infant-ſeed, ſo it conſtituted it to be a duty of the Infant-ſeed of Believers, to receive and bear the Token as applyed unto them. So that what would we have more, indeed what can be more plainly ſpoken: would we have had God ſaid, thou ſhalt keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations. Circumciſion before the Meſſiah come, and *Baptiſm* after.

I, you will ſay, had it been ſo expreſt it would have prevented this controverſie.

But to what purpoſe ſhould it have been ſo expreſt? Is it not all one, *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed in their Generations*, not determining what Covenant ſhould be kept, and then for God firſt to inſtitute Circumciſion as the Token of the Covenant, and then lay that aſide, and ſubſtitute *Baptiſm* in the room of it; the command ſtill remaining in its full force, without the leaſt intimation of a repeal; is not the command ſtill legible, and is it not plain enough, it lyes upon *Abraham*'s Seed in their Generations? And is it not evident, that believing Gentiles are *Abraham*'s Seed? And is it not plainly expreſt, that *Baptiſm* is the preſent Token of the Covenant, as Circumciſion of old was? So that if we will

not call for a command, and when it is brought ſhut our eyes againſt it, here we have as an expreſs command for the baptiſm of the Infant-ſeed of believing Parents, as the Jews had for the circumciſing their Infant-ſeed.

But yet for the further explanation, illuſtration and confirmation of what I have in this particular aſſerted, let two things be obſerved.

Firſt, How the Lord doth vary the phraſe, when he comes to ſpecifie the Covenant then to be kept; 'tis not ſaid, This is my Covenant which thou and thy Seed in their Generations ſhall keep, but, *This is my Covenant which* ye *ſhall keep between me and* you, *every man-child among* you *ſhall be circumciſed, and* you *ſhall circumciſe the fleſh of* your *fore-skin, and it ſhall be a token of the Covenant between me and* you, verſe 10, 11. So again verſe 12. *He that is eight dayes old ſhall be circumciſed among* you, *every man-child in your Generations.* A plain intimation, that he purpoſed a change in the Token of the Covenant, and that Circumciſion ſhould continue the Token of it, only during the firſt Teſtament adminiſtration, while the Covenant it ſelf was to be continued in an eſpecial manner in *Abraham*'s natural loin and poſterity.

Secondly, Let it be obſerved, That this Command ſtands not alone in regard of this interpretation we have put upon it, but hath its parallel: there are other commands in the old Teſtament,

Teſtament that muſt be neceſſariiy interpreted and underſtood after the ſame manner.

I ſhall give you a twofold inſtance in the commands of the Moral Law.

Firſt, Take an inſtance in the ſecond Commandment, *Thou ſhalt not make to thyſelf any graven Image.* Now will any ſay, that this Command is only negative, doth only prohibit groſs Idolatry, according to the letter of the command. Surely 'tis agreed on all hands, that it requires ſomething poſitive, *viz.* That the external worſhip that God himſelf appoints, be exactly obſerved and performed, according to the way and manner himſelf hath determin'd in his Word; and thus when God had appointed and eſtabliſhed that worſhip, conſiſting in ſacrifice, obſervation of dayes, and the like, in and by which his people, under the firſt Teſtament, were to worſhip and ſerve him, that command was to be applied to that kind of worſhip, and did require the exact obſervation and performance thereof, according to the way and manner declared by God himſelf. But now then that kind of worſhip was laid aſide, and other Ordinances and Inſtitutions appointed, in and by which the people of God were and are to worſhip and ſerve him: the Command is of alike authority as before, and doth alike oblige and bind the people of God, to the exact obſervation and performance of that worſhip now eſtabliſhed, according to the way and manner declared in the Word, as it did oblige and bind the peo-

ple of God, under the first Testament, with respect to the worship then established: Though there be an alteration and change made in the particular Ordinances and Institutions, in and by which God will have worship tender'd up to him; yet the Command, as more generally laid down, as requiring the exact observation and performance of whatever worship is of Gods own institution, is of the same authority and force that ever it was; though it doth not oblige us generally to the same acts of worship that it did oblige the Jews unto, yet it equally obligeth us to those acts and duties now prescribed by God, as it did the Jews to that worship prescribed unto them: The Command, as more generally proposed, doth not specifie any paticular acts or duties, in and by which God would be worshipped, it only requires in the general, that whatever act or duty God himself appoints, be exactly observed and performed, and that according to the way and manner declared by himself: the very same is the case of this Command, injoyning the keeping of the Covenant. The Command, as I have said, as thus generally proposed, specifies not what that Covenant is or should be, only requires the application and reception of the Token of the Covenant, and consequently to Circumcision, when that was appointed as the Token of the Covenant, and during its continuance; but upon the cessation of that, to Baptisme, as that Ordinance which God hath declared to be the present Token of the Covenant.

Secondly,

Secondly, Take another Inſtance in the fourth Commandment, *Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.* Here is a Command more generally laid down, injoyning the keeping holy the Sabbath or reſt-day, not ſpecifying which day ſhould be that reſt-day. Now when the Seventh day was inſtituted as that day of reſt, this general Command was to be applyed to that particular day, and did require the keeping of that day holy; but when the Seventh day was laid aſide, and another day, *viz.* The firſt day of the week, inſtituted by Chriſt as that reſt day; now that Command, as ſo generally propoſed, is to be applied to this particular day, and equally obligeth us Chriſtians to the keeping holy the firſt day of the week, as it did the Jews to keep holy the ſeventh; hence we have no expreſs command in the new Teſtament for the keeping holy the firſt day of the week, neither is there any need there ſhould that command, to remember the day day of reſt, and keep it holy, being equally applicable to one day as to another, and God having determined the day, the command is to be applyed unto it as ſo determined by God; which again is the very caſe of this command, under conſideration; it determines not the Covenant to be kept, but requires that the Covenant, whatever God determines it to be, be kept, and conſequently as it firſt obliged to the application and reception of Circumciſion, ſo now it obligeth to the application and reception of Baptiſm.

Now then to come to a close of this first Argument, we see the Promises are true, and consequently the conclusion is certain, namely, That it is the will of Christ, that the Infant-seed of believing Parents should be baptized.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

The ſecond and third Argument, for the confirmation of the laſt ſubordinate Propoſition, propoſed and managed. The ſeveral Inſtances of Houſholds being baptized, conſidered.

The ſecond Argument.

IF the Infant-ſeed of believing Parents were in primitive times baptized, either by the Apoſtles themſelves, or by any others by their allowance, direction, or approbation, then it was or ſtill is according to the will of Chriſt, that they ſhould be baptized: But the former is true, therefore the latter. The conſequence in the Major propoſition will be readily granted on all hands. That which alone needs proof is this, *viz.* That the Infant-ſeed of believing Parents were in primitive times, either by the Apoſtles themſelves, or by others, by their allowance, direction or approbation baptized. For the confirmation of which this one Argument may ſuffice.

If the Infant-ſeed of believing Parents were by the Apoſtles owned and looked upon, as appertaining to, or as Members of the myſtical Body of Chriſt, as viſible, then they were, either by themſelves, or by others, by their allowance, direction

direction and approbation, admitted and implanted into that Body by Baptism: But the Infant seed of believing Parents were owned and looked upon by the Apostles, as before expressed: *Ergo, &c.*

Here again the Consequence in the Major proposition will be, I suppose, readily granted by our Opposers, and 'tis sufficiently evident by this Argument.

If Baptism was appointed by Christ, for the solemn admission of such into his mystical Body, as visible, as did appertain thereunto, or were Members thereof, and there was no other way or means appointed for the same end and purpose, then all that the Apostles did own and look upon, as appertaining to, or as Members of that Body, were, either by the Apostles themselves, or by others, by their allowance, direction and approbation, admitted and implanted into it by Baptism: But the former is true, therefore the latter; the Minor here alone needs proof, and that consists of these two branches.

First, That Baptism was appointed by Christ, for the solemn admission and implantation of such into his mystical Body, as visible, as did appertain thereunto, or were Members thereof.

Secondly, That there is no other way or means appointed by Christ for that end and purpose.

First, For the first, see 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. *For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond*

or

or free, *and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.* What may be objected from this Scripture against the baptiſm of Infants, ſhall be taken notice of by and by. All that I cite it at preſent for is, to prove, that *Baptiſm* was appointed by Chriſt, for the ſolemn admiſſion of perſons into his Body, as viſible, which is ſufficiently evident.

Secondly, That there is no other way or means appointed by Chriſt, for the ſolemn admiſſion of any into his viſible myſtical *Body*: If any ſhall ſay there is, let them ſhew it and prove from Scripture what they affirm, and I ſhall readily grant the invalidity of this Argument; but that doubtleſs none will attempt to do, ſo that the truth of the Major propoſition is unqueſtionable,

For the Minor, *viz.* That the Infant-ſeed of believing Parents were owned and looked upon by the Apoſtles, as appertaining to, or as Members of the myſtical *Body* of Chriſt, as viſible, This will be denyed, and therefore muſt be proved, and I ſhall prove it by theſe two Arguments, both which being grounded upon expreſs and poſitive Scriptures, will render the addition of more wholly needleſs.

Firſt, All thoſe who were by the Apoſtle owned and looked upon, and that as perſonally or particularly conſidered, as the actual Subjects of the *Promiſe* of Salvation, were owned and looked upon by them, as appertaining to, or as Members of the myſtical *Body* of Chriſt, as viſible: *But* the Infant-ſeed of believing Pa-

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rents were owned and looked upon by the Apoſtles, and that as perſonally and particularly conſidered, as the actual Subjects of the Promiſe of Salvation, therefore they were owned and looked upon by them, as appertaining to, or as Members of the myſtical *Body* of Chriſt, as viſible.

The Minor propoſition hath been already proved; and as for the Major, that is evident thus, Chriſt is the Saviour of his body, *Epheſ.* 5. 23. Now to be under a Promiſe of Salvation, is to be under a Promiſe of being ſaved by Chriſt: hence all that are under a Promiſe of being ſaved by Chriſt, muſt needs appertain to, or be of his myſtical *Body*, for 'tis of his *Body* that he is the Saviour.

But two things will be objected.

Object. 1. Firſt, That Chriſt is ſaid to be the Saviour of all men, 1 *Tim.* 4. 10. To be the Saviour of the world, *John* 4. 42. and therefore though it ſhould be granted, that the *Infant*-ſeed of believing Parents are under the Promiſe of being ſaved by *Chriſt*, it will not follow, that they were looked upon as appertaining to, or as Members of his myſtical *Body*.

Anſw. To that I anſwer, that though Chriſt in a large ſence may be, and is in Scripture ſaid to be the Saviour of all men, and the Saviour of the world, yet no particular or individual perſon is actually, and that for the preſent, as perſonally conſidered under any Promiſe of being ſaved by him, (eſpecially taking Salvation of ſpiritual

and

and eternal Salvation) but such who are of, or do appertain to his myſtical *Body*: therefore it is ſaid of theſe *Epheſians*, before their imbracement of Chriſt, *They were ſtrangers to the Covenants of promiſe*, Epheſ. 2. 12, They had nothing to do with the Promiſes of ſpiritual and ſaving Mercies; and as they were ſtrangers to the Covenants of promiſe, ſo they were without hope, without any grounded hope, intereſt in the Promiſes being the alone true ground of all hope of ſpiritual and eternal Salvation: ſo that intereſt in the Promiſe of Salvation, declares the perſons ſo intereſſed, to appertain to, or to be of the myſtical *Body* of Chriſt, all others being ſtrangers to the Promiſes, and therefore without hope.

Object. 2, Secondly, It is objected, That when it is ſaid, Chriſt is the Saviour of his *Body*, it is only meant of his myſtical *Body*, as inviſible, and conſequently, in caſe this Scripture will prove, that the Infant-ſeed of believing Parents, as having the Promiſe of Salvation appertaining to them, do appertain to the myſtical *Body* of Chriſt, it will prove, that they do univerſally appertain to his Myſtical *Body*, as inviſible, which it will be ſaid we our ſelves deny, and therefore this Scripture is impertinently brought to prove their relation to the myſtical *Body* of Chriſt, as viſible, which only ſpeaks of his myſtical *Body*, as inviſible.

Anſw. To that I anſwer, This Objection will receive a more full anſwer by and by, where I ſhall meet with it again: at preſent I ſhall only

ſay,

ſay, 'tis evident the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the myſtical Body of Chriſt, as viſible, and not meerly as inviſible; for let it be obſerved, that Body and Church, in this diſcourſe of the Apoſtle, are Synonimies, or words exactly anſwering one another in ſence and ſignification: whom he intends by Body he intends by Church, and ſo on the other hand, whom he intends by Church he intends by Body: Now this Church or Body of Chriſt, of which he is ſaid here to be the Saviour, was that Church or Body, of which the *Epheſians* were an homogeneal Part, that is, a part of the ſame kind with the whole; hence the Apoſtle ſpeaks of them, as joynt Members with himſelf of this Body, verſe 20. for we are Members of his Body, of his fleſh, and of his bones. Mark, he takes in the *Epheſians* univerſally and indefinitely, one as well as another, as joynt Members with him of this Body: So *Epheſ.* 2. 19. *Now therefore ye are no longer Strangers and Forreigners, but fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Houſhold of God.* To be fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Houſhold of God, is all one with being of this Church or Body. Now it is evident, the Apoſtle did not ſuppoſe, that every individual perſon of this Church were Members of the inviſible Body of Chriſt, what he ſaith, *Acts* 20 30. plainly declares the contrary. Now then this Church or Body, of which the Apoſtle ſaith, Chriſt was the Head and Saviour, being that Church or Body, of which the *Epheſians* were an homogeneal part, and they not

being

being ſuppoſed by the Apoſtle univerſally to appertain to the Church or *Body* of Chriſt, as inviſible; It will undoubtedly follow, that he doth not ſpeak of the Church or *Body* of Chriſt meerly as inviſible, but as viſible. Chriſt is in Scripture ſaid to be the Saviour of his Church or *Body*, as viſibly conſidered, and the Infant-ſeed of believing Parents being under a Promiſe of Salvation by him, or of being ſaved by him, they muſt needs by the Apoſtles be owned and looked upon, as Members of that *Body* of which he is the Saviour, none, as I have ſaid, being under a Promiſe of being ſaved by him, but ſuch as do appertain to that *Body*, of which he is the Saviour.

Secondly, All thoſe who under the Goſpel adminiſtration, and that as perſonally conſidered, are the actual Subjects of that Promiſe, wherein God ingaged himſelf to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed in their Generations, were owned and looked upon by the Apoſtles, as appertaining to, or as Members of the myſtical *Body* of Chriſt, as viſible: But the Infant ſeed of believing Parents under the Goſpel adminiſtration, and that as perſonally conſidered, are the actual Subjects of that Promiſe; therefore, *&c.*

The Major is undeniably proved, by that poſitive Aſſertion of the Apoſtle, *Galatians* 3. 16. *Now to Abraham and his Seed were the Promiſes made; he ſaith not, to his Seeds, as of many, but to thy Seed, which is Chriſt*; that is, Chriſt myſtical. Now if that Promiſe were made

made to *Christ*, and to *Christ* only, as we see the Apostle denyes it to be made to any other, it was not made to Seeds, but to Seed, to thy Seed, which, saith the Apostle, is *Christ*. I say, if this Promise was made only to *Christ*, it will undeniably follow, that whosoever that Promise was made unto, or to whom that Promise may by Scripture-warrant be applyed, as the actual Subjects of it, and that as personally considered, they must needs by the Apostles be looked upon and owned, as appertaining to, or as Members of the mystical *Body* of *Christ*; and therefore let none evade this plain evidence, to the deceiving themselves or others, by saying, that there are Promises made to others, that are not Members of the mystical *Body* of *Christ*. Let it be remembred, the Argument speaks not of Promises in the general, nor of any kind of Promises, but of this *Promise* in special; nor doth it speak of this *Promise*, as an indefinite *Promise* made to any sort or species of persons, collectively taken, where no single or individual person can be said to be an actual Subject of it, as personally considered; and therefore to produce any such Instances is wholly impertinent: as to the Argument in hand, let it be shewed, that any person, whether old or young, might according to Scripture be accounted an actual Subject of this *Promise*, and that as personally considered, who yet was not by the Apostles owned or looked upon, as appertaining to, or as a Member of the mystical *Body* of *Christ*, till which be done, which I shall not doubt to affirm

is impoſſible to be done) we may undoubtedly conclude, that all thoſe that are the actual Subjects of that Promiſe, as perſonally conſidered, were owned and looked upon by the Apoſtles, as appertaining to, or as Members of the myſtical Body of Chriſt, which is the thing affirmed in our Major propoſition. For the Minor propoſition, *viz.* That the Infant-ſeed of believing Parents are, under the Goſpel adminiſtration, ſuch Subjects of that Promiſe; this hath been already fully proved; whence our Concluſion is undeniable, That they were owned and looked upon by the Apoſtles, as appertaining to, or as Members of the myſtical Body of Chriſt.

Object. But it will be ſaid, That by Chriſt here we are to underſtand Chriſt myſtical, as inviſible, and not as viſible. The Promiſes are made to Chriſt, that is, to the real and internal Members of his myſtical Body.

Anſw. To that I ſhall anſwer theſe two things.

Firſt, *Ubi Lex non diſtinguit, non diſtinguendum eſt*, Where the Law diſtinguiſheth not we are not to diſtinguiſh. Now the Apoſtle tells us, the Promiſes are made to Chriſt; not to Chriſt, either under this or that notion or conſideration; here is no diſtinction between Chriſt, as viſible or inviſible, but ſimply and abſolutely, the Promiſe is to thy Seed, which is Chriſt.

But you will ſay, Though the Apoſtle doth not here diſtinguiſh, yet the Scripture elſewhere

warrants that distinction; and it is certain, the Promises do not really appertain to any, but such as have a real union with, and interest in Christ, of whom his Body, as invisible, is constituted and made up, therefore we are to understand the Apostle, as intending only the invisible Body of Christ.

To that I answer, It is granted, that in order to a due application of this or any other Promise to our selves, and in order to our enjoyment of the good promised, we must not only look to a visible profession of Christ, which constitutes us of his Body, as visible, but we are to look to the reallity of our union with, and interest in him. But yet let it be carefully observed, that the Scripture presumes and takes it for granted, that as to particular persons, those who do visibly belong to Christ, are of his Body, as invisibly, as well as visibly considered: Hence in all that it speaks to, or of the Body of Christ, it speaks to or of it, simply or absolutely, as his Body, wirhout distinguishing of it as visible or invisible. And let it be further carefully observed, that that distinction of Seeds intimated by the Apostle, whereof some have the Promises made to them, and others not, doth not respect the Members of the Body of Christ, as visible, as though some of them had the Promises made to them, in a contradiction from others, visibly of the same Body, who have not the Promises made unto them, but the distinction is either between such, who might plead an interest in the Promises as related to *Abraham*, as

his

his natural Children, who yet cleaved to the Law for Righteousness and Life: Or between such, who though in word they did profess Faith in Christ, yet did indeed fall in with, and imbrace such doctrines and practices as did, *ipso facto*, forfeit and disanul their right of membership in the mystical Body of Christ, as visible, and such who did visibly adhere and cleave to Christ in faith and obedience, in opposition to the imbracement or falling in with any such doctrines or practices. Now the Apostle affirms, that to these, and not to those, the Promise was made. Indeed this I shall readily grant, that the holy Ghost would have all to know, that if any, while they keep up a visible profession of Christ, and of adhearing alone to him in faith and obedience, should yet act short of, or contrary to that their profession, it was not their meer profession that would give them the actual possession of the good promised, they must act according to their profession, otherwise though the Promises, as externally promulgated and declared, are made to them, and they in *foro Ecclesiæ* had a right to them, yet it was none of the intendment of God, that upon the terms of a base profession they should enjoy the good promised; but this I say, that the Promises, in respect of the external promulgation and declaration of them, are made to Christ mystical, without consideration had to that distinction of visible and invisible, the Holy Ghost speaking to or of them, by men speaks according to what visibly appear of them.

But ſecondly, I anſwer, That Chriſt here muſt needs be underſtood of Chriſt myſtical, as viſibly conſidered: This hath been touched upon already, and for further ſatisfaction, ſee Mr. *Gobbett* in his *Juſt Vindication*, page 57. and it evidently appears from hence, becauſe particular and individual perſons might ordinarily be known to appertain to, and be Members of Chriſt, as here ſpoken of by the Apoſtle. Now no individual or particular perſon can be ordinarily known to appertain to Chriſt, or to be a Member of him, as inviſibly conſidered; ſee verſe 28. where ſaith the Apoſtle, *Ye are all one in Chriſt*; the Apoſtle ſpeaks to the *Galatians*, and ſaith he, *Ye are all one in Chriſt*; and in ſaying they were all one in Chriſt, he muſt needs acknowledge them to be all in Chriſt; how could they be all one in Chriſt, unleſs they were in Chriſt? But ſure none will ſuppoſe, that the Apoſtle did infallibly know them, to have been univerſally every individual perſon among them of the Body of Chriſt, as inviſible, therefore he muſt needs ſpeak of Chriſt here as viſible, and not meerly as inviſible; and beſides, let the fotegoing Arguments, to prove that the Infant-ſeed of believing Parents, and that as ſuch, are included as the actual Subjects of this Promiſe, be well weighed, which ſuppoſing it to be true, it will undeniably follow, that the Apoſtle here ſpeaks of the myſtical Body of Chriſt, as viſible, in as much as the Infant-ſeed of believing Parents may then be ordinarily known to appertain to Chriſt, as here ſpoken of by the Apoſtle.

And

And therefore whereas our Oppoſers affirm, That Chriſt here is to be underſtood of Chriſt myſtical, as inviſible, and thereupon conclude, that the Infant-ſeed of believing Parents cannot, as ſuch, be ſuppoſed to appertain unto Chriſt, and conſequently not included as Subjects of that Promiſe, ſaid by our Apoſtle to be made unto Chriſt.

We on the other hand affirm, and I hope have ſufficiently proved, that they are included as joynt Subjects with their Parents of that Promiſe, and upon that ground ought to be looked upon as appertaining to Chriſt, and conſequently that by Chriſt here we are to underſtand Chriſt myſtical as viſible, and not meerly as inviſible.

Now unleſs our Oppoſers ſhall produce clearer evidence, that the Apoſtle doth indeed ſpeak of the myſtical *Body* of Chriſt, meerly as inviſible, then hath been produced, to prove the Infant-ſeed of believing Parents, and that as ſuch, to be included in that *Promiſe*, we ſhall take it for granted, that he ſpeaks of Chriſt as viſible, & that the Infant-ſeed of believing *Parents* do appertain to; or are Members of his myſtical *Body* as viſible, and conſequently, *Quod erat demonſtrandum*, were either by the Apoſtles themſelves, or by ſome others, by their allowance, direction or approbation, admitted and implanted into that *Body* by Baptiſm.

Now as a cloſe of this Argument, it may not be altogether unſeaſonable to ſhew in a few words (it needs not many) what reſpect we

have to that myſtical Relation, wherein the Infant ſeed of believing *Parents* ſtand towards *Abraham*, as his Seed, in the application of Baptiſm unto them, the conſideration of which I afore referred to the handling of this laſt Propoſition, and I know not where to touch upon it ſo ſeaſonably as here.

And for this let it be noted, that in the application of *Baptiſm* we have a direct and primary reſpect to their ſtate, as joynt Subjects with their *Parents* of the *Promiſes* of the Covenant, the Covenant and *Promiſes* thereof being entred with, and made unto *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations, as with and to the *Parents* perſonally conſidered, ſo with and to their Seed, as ſuch: Hence both *Parents* and Seed are to have the Token of the Covenant applyed unto them, they being joynt Subjects of the ſame Covenant and *Promiſes*, they are alike to partake of the Sign and Token of the Covenant: Hence look what reſpect we have to the myſtical Relation of believing *Parents* to *Abraham*, in the application of Baptiſm unto them, the ſame reſpect we have to the myſtical Relation of their Infant ſeed to *Abraham*, in the application of Baptiſm unto them.

The third Argument: If intereſt in that grand *Promiſe* of the Covenant, wherein God ingaged to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed in their Generations, be alone and by it ſelf a ſufficient ground, upon which perſons may and ought to be exhorted and moved unto *Baptiſm*, then

then all those, who have an interest in that Promise, may and ought to be baptized: But interest in that Promise is alone and by it self a sufficient ground, upon which persons may and ought to be exhorted and moved unto Baptism: Therefore all those, who have an interest in that Promise, and consequently Infants they having an interest in it, may and ought to be baptized.

The Consequence in the Major Proposition of this Prosyllogism cannot be denied; for if a Minister may exhort or move one to be baptized upon this sole ground, that he hath an interest in that Promise, he may and ought to apply Baptism to him upon that sole ground; otherwise persons might be duly exhorted to a duty, which would be unlawful for them to practice, which would be absurd.

Therefore 'tis the Minor only which, I suppose, will be denyed, which yet, I judge, will be granted by the major part of our Opposers; and for the satisfaction of others, let these two Scriptures be compared together, and well weighed. *Gen.* 17. 9. *Acts* 2. 38, 39 saith God to *Abraham*, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant, therefore thou and thy Seed in their Generations:* saith the Apostle, *Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sin, for the Promise is to you, and to your Children.* Now let it be diligently observed, how the Holy Ghost grounds the Command or Exhortation to keep the Covenant, that is, the Token of the Covenant, upon interest in, and right to the Promises of the

Covenant, *I will be thy God*, ſaith the Lord to Abraham, *and the God of thy Seed in their Generations, thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed in their Generations.* Now to what end or purpoſe can it be imagined, that the Command to keep the Covenant ſhould be uſhered in with a *therefore*, had not the Command ſome reference to the Promiſes immediately afore propoſed? And what reference can it be imagined to have but this, that Gods vouchſafement of theſe Promiſes was the ground and foundation of the Command? The Command was given upon no other account or conſideration, but their intereſt in the foregoing Promiſes, and the uſe the thing commanded ſhould be of to them, reſpective to theſe Promiſes, ſo that I ſay, the Command is grounded upon their intereſt in the Promiſes; having theſe Promiſes, *Thou ſhalt therefore keep my Covenant:* In like manner the Apoſtle grounds his Exhortation to Baptiſm, the preſent Token of the Covenant, or enforceth it by the conſideration of right to, and intereſt in the Promiſe, be baptized, for *the Promiſe is unto you*: And that the truth of what we affirm may more fully appear, let us enquire into two things.

First, What Promiſe it was the Apoſtle ſaith was *unto them.*

Secondly, What the meaning of the Apoſtle is in theſe words, *The Promiſe is to you.*

First,

First, For the first, And thus the *Promiſe* here ſaid by the Apoſtle to be unto them, muſt needs be ſome *Promiſe*, which is common to all that are called of God, and yet peculiar and proper to them and their Children: hence it could not be either the *Promiſe* of ſending Chriſt, or the *Promiſe* of the extraordinary gift of the Spirit; for as the former is not proper and peculiar to ſuch as God calls, ſo the latter is not common to them all, and therefore it muſt needs be either that grand *Promiſe* of the Covenant, or ſome other of the eſſence and ſubſtance of the Covenant, as remiſſion of ſin, or the like, which is all one as to our preſent purpoſe.

Secondly, For the ſecond, And thus I ſuppoſe all parties muſt neceſſarily and anſwerably do concenter in one of theſe two interpretations, either that the Apoſtles meaning is, that the *Promiſe* was to them, ſo as that they had a preſent actual and perſonal intereſt in it, which ſeems moſt agreeable to the letter of the words; or elſe that at preſent the *Promiſe* was to them only by way of offer and tender, but would be unto them, ſo as that they ſhould have an actual and perſonal intereſt in it, upon the Lords calling of them, or which is all one, upon their repentance; and that the Apoſtle doth eye and intend their perſonal intereſt in the *Promiſe*, either as at preſent, according to the firſt ſenſe of the words, or future, to be obtained by their repentance, according to the latter, is evident; becauſe otherwiſe the having of the *Promiſe*

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to them, would have been no ſufficient ground for the Apoſtles Exhortation to *Baptiſm*, neither could he rationally make it a motive to them to be baptized; ſo that according to the latter interpretation of the Apoſtles words, 'tis as if he ſhould ſay, the *Promiſe* is to you by way of offer and tender at preſent, therefore repent, whereby you ſhall have an actual intereſt in it, and thereupon be baptized; and that the Apoſtle exhorts to Repentance only, and not both to Baptiſm and Repentance, in order to their having an actual intereſt in the Promiſe, is paſt all doubt, in as much as Baptiſm muſt neceſſarily follow upon, and not precede intereſt in the Promiſe, as a means either by it ſelf, or as a joynt means with Repentance, to obtain that intereſt; ſo that, I ſay, his meaning muſt be this, repent, that you may have an intereſt in the Promiſe, and upon your repentance be baptized for the remiſſion of ſin, for then the *Promiſe* is to you, that is, you then will have an actual right to, and intereſt in it: So that take the meaning of the Apoſtle which way you will, it is all one as to my preſent purpoſe, in as much as he grounds his Exhortation to *Baptiſm* upon actual intereſt in the Promiſe, or makes that the motive to excite and ſtir them up to *Baptiſm*: now intereſt in the Promiſe being the ground upon which, or the motive by which the Apoſtle preſſeth them to *Baptiſm*, it muſt needs be a ſufficient ground for the application of *Baptiſm*; and conſequently whoever hath an intereſt in the Promiſe may duly and rightly have *Baptiſme* applyed unto them.

Object.

Object. But it will be objected, The Apostle conjoyns Repentance and *Baptisme* in his Exhortation, and therefore they cannot be separated in practice.

Answ. 1. To that I answer two things.

First, That though the Apostle conjoyns these two duties in his Exhortation, yea, though he should ground his Exhortation to the practice of them both upon the same foundation, *viz.* interest in and right to the Promise; yet that doth not necessarily imply an inseparable connexion between them in practice, two duites may be conjoyned in an Exhortation, and both moved to upon one and the same ground, and yet be separable in their practice, and then either of these duties may be pressed to and answerably practiced apart upon that ground, let us see it in these two duties of Repentance and *Baptism*, exhorted to by the Apostle: it is evident the Apostle exhorts to these two duties, with reference to two distinct ends; the one, *viz.* Repentance, with reference to their obtaining an actual interest in the Promise, suppose that were wanting, or with reference to the removal of a special bar, which at present lay in the way of their *Baptism*, supposing them to have a present interest in it: The other, *viz.* *Baptism*, with reference to the confirmation of their faith in, or their assurance of their enjoyment of the good promised, upon supposition of a precedent interest in the Promise. Now when these two ends are separated, as in respect of many they may be, sometimes Repentance may and ought

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to be preſſed to and practiſed, when *Baptiſm* is unneceſſary, as in caſe of a *Believers* falling into ſin after *Baptiſm*: So on the other hand, *Baptiſm* may be exhorted to and practiſed, when yet Repentance, or the profeſſion of Repentance, is no way neceſſary, as in the caſe of Chriſts *Baptiſm*; ſo in *John Baptiſt*'s caſe, ſuppoſing him, he being ſanctified in the womb, to have kept up the due exerciſe of Grace and Holineſs from his infancy: Now in theſe caſes theſe two duties are inſeparable in practiſe, and in ſuch caſes either of them may be diſtinctly and ſeverally preſſed to upon this ground: what is a ſufficient ground to bottom an Exhortation upon to the practiſe of two duties, muſt needs, ſuppoſing theſe duties are inſeparable in their practiſe, be a ſufficient ground to bottom an Exhortation to either of them apart upon, ſo that though theſe two duties are conjoyned by the Apoſtle in his Exhortation, and both exhorted to upon one and the ſame ground, yet they being ſeparable in practiſe, either of them may be exhorted to, and practiſed upon that ground, according to the caſe and condition of the parties concerned in them: whoever hath an intereſt in the Promiſe, in caſe of the commiſſion of any ſin, may be exhorted to repentance upon that ſole ground of his intereſt in the Promiſe; ſo whoever hath an intereſt in the Promiſe, may and ought to be exhorted to *Baptiſme*, upon that ſole ground of his intereſt in the Promiſe; an Exhortation to both, taken either conjunctively or ſeverally, may

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be rightfully grounded upon the perſons intereſt in the Promiſe.

Hence ſecondly, I anſwer, Let it be granted, that the Apoſtle exhorts thoſe trembling Jews to repentance, as a neceſſary prerequiſite to their *Baptiſm*, yet that was only either in order to the confirming, continuing, and viſibly manifeſting their precedent intereſt in the Promiſe, or removing that ſpecial bar, that lay in the way of their *Baptiſm*, 'twas their intereſt in the Promiſe that was the proper ground upon which the Apoſtle exhorts them to *Baptiſm*; Repentance is no further neceſſary unto *Baptiſm*, then as it is a part of the condition of intereſt in the Promiſe, and an external diſcovery of that intereſt to the Adminiſtrators of *Baptiſm*, as in the caſe of perſons afore unconverted, or for the removing ſome ſpecial bar lying in the way of *Baptiſm*, as in caſe of *Believers* fallen into ſin afore the application of *Baptiſm* unto them; in caſe intereſt in the Promiſe may be known, when Repentance is not upon ſuch accounts incumbent as a duty, that is, a ſufficient ground upon which to move unto and apply *Baptiſm*: And that which ſtrongly perſwades us to judge, that the Apoſtle exhorts to Repentance, not as ſimply and abſolutely neceſſary to *Baptiſm*, at all times and in all caſes, but only as neceſſary in their ſpecial caſe, and in caſes parallel with theirs, is not only his grounding his Exhortation to both theſe duties, upon one and the ſame ground, thereby plainly declaring their rightful practice, as conjunctively, when the caſe ſo requires, ſo ſeparately,

ratoly, or each apart by themſelves, when either of them is not neceſſary or practicable by the parties concerned in them upon that ſole ground; but the whole reference that *Baptiſm* hath to the Promiſe, or the Souls intereſt in it. *Baptiſm* hath no neceſſary reference unto Repentance as already performed, ſo as its antecedency ſhould be indiſpenſably required, in order to a right application of it; neither hath repentance any neceſſary reference to *Baptiſm*, ſo as that *Baptiſm* may not be adminiſtred, but upon ſuppoſition of its antecedency, as we ſee in the caſe of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and *John Baptiſt*, as before noted; but *Baptiſm* hath a direct reference to the Promiſe, and the Souls intereſt in that; and therefore when repentance is required as a neceſſary prerequiſite to *Baptiſm*, it is only upon ſome of the accounts before mentioned; 'tis intereſt in the Promiſe that the Apoſtle grounds his Exhortation to *Baptiſm* upon, and conſequently intereſt in the Promiſe is a ſufficient ground for the application of *Baptiſm*.

Now that the Infant-ſeed of believing *Parents* have a right to, and intereſt in that promiſe, hath been already proved, and receives no little confirmation from this Text of the Apoſtle, *The Promiſe is to you, and to your Children*: but my deſign is not, *Actum agere*, to do that which others have done already: I ſhall therefore only ſay, that ſuppoſe it might admit of a doubt, whether Children here are to be taken, *qua* Children, as the Children of ſuch Parents as

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theſe the Apoſtle ſpeaks to, or whether their right to the Promiſe doth not ſuppoſe their perſonal calling: I ſay, though this might admit of a debate, taking this Scripture abſtractly in it ſelf, yet comparing this Scripture with the evidence before given, that the Promiſe runs in that extent and latitude, as to take in Parents and Children, ſurely it is paſt all rational doubt, that Children here are to be taken as the Children of ſuch Parents, *the promiſe is to you and to your Children* as they are your Children. But having ſo fully proved this, I ſhall add no more at preſent.

Fourthly, To add ſtrength to the foregoing Arguments, let us take in thoſe ſeveral Inſtances recorded in the new Teſtament, of whole Houſholds being baptized upon the faith of converſion of one or both Parents: That, together with the Parents, upon their faith, their reſpective Houſholds were frequently baptized, is in the new Teſtament fully declared: See *Acts* 16. 14. 15. ſo alſo verſe 33. of the ſame Chapter, 1 *Cor.* 16. 16. touching all which Inſtances let theſe three things be obſerved.

Firſt, That it is very probable, if not fully certain, that at leaſt ſome in or of ſome of theſe Houſes, ſaid to be baptized, were baptized not upon the account of their own perſonal profeſſion of Faith and Repentance, but upon the account of their Parents Faith. For the clearing up of this I ſhall premiſe three things.

First,

First, That under this term *Houſe or Houſhold*, we muſt comprehend and take in all the natural Children that were, at leaſt, then preſent, of theſe *Parents*, whoſe Houſes are recorded to be baptized, we muſt take the Holy Ghoſt, according to the literal and proper ſenſe of his words, where there is no neceſſary Reaſon, as here there is not, otherwiſe to underſtand him.

Secondly, That theſe Houſes or Houſholds may be rationally ſuppoſed to be conſiderably great; theſe phraſes, *Houſholds*, *all his*, and the like, note only a bare plurality of perſons, but that they were in ſome meaſure numerous.

Thirdly, That not only *Infants* as new born, or in their infant-ſtate, but ſuch Children, who had arrived to a higher ſtate of childhood, or were grown to ſome years of maturity, muſt yet be rationally ſuppoſed to be baptized, not upon the account of their own perſonal profeſſion of Faith and Repentance, but upon the account of their *Parents*: and the Reaſon is evident, becauſe ſuch Children cannot be rationally ſuppoſed to be capable of attaining to, in an ordinary way, a competent meaſure of knowledge in the Myſteries of the Goſpel in ſo ſhort a time, as did intervene between the Parents imbracement of the Goſpel and their own, and their Houſes Baptiſm: And the Spirit of God, in his ordinary way of working, works according to the capacity of the Subjects he works in and upon, *Unum quodque recipitur ſecundum modum recipientis.*

pientis. Hence our Oppoſers muſt either ſay, that in their Houſes there were not only no Infants, but none in their childhood, or elſe they muſt ſay, that when the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks of Houſes, he intended only ſome particular perſons in thoſe Houſes.

But for the firſt, It is altogether improbable, that there ſhould be ſo many Families, and yet no young Children in them, there is a probability there might be Infants, but much more that there were Children, who though paſt their infancy in a ſtrict ſenſe, yet improbably baptized upon the account of their own perſonal profeſſion: and as for the latter, that would be to recede from the letter of the Text, which ought not to be without evident neceſſity, whereas here is none at all. And for the further clearing up of this firſt Obſervation, let us take a more particular account of that one Inſtance of *Lydia*'s houſe ſaid to be baptized with her; the ſtory you have *Acts* 16. 14, 15. And here let three things be attended to.

Firſt, That it is evident her Houſhold was with her at that Aſſembly of Women, to whom the Apoſtle preached; for after her own and her Houſholds baptiſm, ſhe beſeecheth *Paul* to go home with her, verſe 15.

Secondly, It is evident this was an Aſſembly of Women, verſe 13.

Thirdly, Here is no mention made of the converſion of any but of *Lydia* her ſelf. Now let things have their due conſideration; *Ly-*

dia's Houſhold was baptized, that is, all her Houſhold, or all that appertained to her, that might be properly ſaid to be her Houſhold: it ſeems ſhe carried her whole Houſhold to that *Aſſembly*; this *Houſhold* probably numerous, or conſiſting of ſeveral perſons, otherwiſe the particulars would in reaſon have been mentioned; here were no Males grown up, for it was an *Aſſembly* of Women: It is true, there might be Males in their infancy or childhood, it being no way unbeſeeming to carry ſuch to ſuch an *Aſſembly*, and notwithſtanding them, the *Aſſembly* might be ſaid to be an *Aſſembly* of Women. Now how improbable is it, that there ſhould be a Family, a numerous Family, and not one Male among them; if there were any, they muſt rationally be ſuppoſed to be in their childhood; a great Family, and not one Infant or Child in it, but every one capable of a ready underſtanding what was taught, ſo as in a few hours to attain to a competent knowledge in the Myſteries of the Goſpel, and theſe all wrought upon by one Sermon, when none elſe in the whole *Aſſembly*, for ought is recorded, were wrought upon; yet that the Holy Ghoſt ſhould only take notice of the converſion of *Lydia* her her ſelf, and not in the leaſt intimate the converſion of any in or of her *Houſhold*, I will not ſay, but that it is ſimply poſſible, that there might be the concurrence of all theſe things, but it is to me altogether improbable, that it ſhould be ſo, it is vaſtly more probable, that ſome, if not all, that were baptized of her

her Houshold were indeed baptized upon the account of her Faith, and not upon the account of a personal profession of Faith and Repentance that themselves did make.

But here it is said, That this Houshold of *Lydia* had some Men in it, as appears from verse 40, and it is probable some Women also, who were converted with *Lydia*, and they are the Houshold said to be baptized.

But to that I answer, That it doth no way appear that these Brethren, whom the Apostle, verse 40. is said to have seen, were of *Lydia's* Houshold, they might be Neighbours converted after *Paul's* comming to her House, who now came in to see *Paul*, or whom *Paul* before his departure went to visit: 'Tis evident by what hath been already said they were none of her Houshold, said before to be baptized with her; so that this one Instance, all things considered, makes it exceeding probable, if not evidently certain, that some in the Houses, whose baptism is recorded in Scripture, were baptized upon the meer account of the Parents Faith, without consideration had to their own personal Faith and repentance.

Secondly, Let it be observed, that it doth not appear, that any in or of these Houshold were converted antecedent to their baptism; as for *Lydia's* Houshold, there is not the least intimation of the conversion of any besides *Lydia* herself; yea, there is, as we have already seen, some reason, a certainty, that at least some of her Houshold were baptized upon the account of

her faith, and not their own personal profession; and as for the Gaolers Houshold, it doth not certainly appear, that any in or of his, said to be baptized, were converted antecedent to that their baptism: It is true, there are two passages urged to prove, that they were such of his as were wrought upon by the Word as spoken by *Paul*.

First, It is said verse 32. *That they*, that is, *Paul* and *Silas*, *spake to him the Word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house*: Whence it is supposed, that all that were in his House, and consequently his, said to be baptized, ver 33, must needs be such as were capable of having the Word preached to them.

But to that four things may be replyed.

First, It is uncertain whether this speaking of the Word, of which *Luke* speaks, was antecedent to the baptism of the Gaoler and his House; things are not alwayes declared in that order in which they were done.

Secondly, Suppose that be granted, yet it cannot be concluded from thence, that there were none incapable of having the Word spoken to them in his House: See a like Instance *Deut.* 31. verse last, it is said, *Moses spake in the ears of all the Congregation of Israel the words of this Song, until they were ended*: Now shall we conclude, there were no Infants or little Children in that Congregation? The contrary is evident, verse 12.

Thirdly, It is no way evident, that the persons in his House, to whom the Word was spoken,

ken, were numerically the ſame perſons ſaid to be baptized, all of his ſaid to be baptized, ſeems plainly to intend different perſons from all thoſe in his *Houſe*, to whom the Word was ſpoken.

But fourthly, Suppoſe the perſons were numerically the ſame, yet the having the Word ſpoken to them, will not conclude their converſion by that Word, the Word may be ſpoken to thoſe that are not converted by it; ſo that this paſſage doth no way evince the converſion of any in his *Houſe*, beſides himſelf alone, antecedent to his and his *Houſholds* baptiſm: I do not ſay abſolutely there were none, but it cannot be certainly concluded that there were any.

Secondly, The other paſſage urged to prove the converſion of the *Houſhold* antecedent to their baptiſm, is that verſe 34. where it is ſaid, according as we read, *He rejoyced, believing in God with all his Houſhold*, but the Greek runs exactly thus, ἠγαλλιάσατο, πανοικὶ πεπιστευκὼς τῷ Θεῷ; *He rejoyced with all his houſe, he believing in God*. Now his houſe might rejoyce, though none were ſavingly wrought upon but the Gaoler himſelf; and indeed the Apoſtles laying the ground of their joy in his perſonal believing, they rejoyced, he believing in God, doth plainly intimate, that as yet the Gaoler alone did believe; for why elſe ſhould he not ſay, they believing in God, or at leaſt that the benefit, which was the matter and occaſion of their joy, did accrew unto them through his faith? 'Tis not

for nothing that the Apostle makes his personal believing in God the ground of the joy of the whole House; so that it doth not certainly appear, that any in the Gaolers house did believe antecedent to their baptism.

And for the Houshold of *Stephanus*, there is nothing evidencing their or any of their faith antecedent to their baptism: 'Tis true, we read that his Houshold did addict themselves to the Ministry of the Saints, 1 Cor. 16. 15. But whether these, said to addict themselves to this Ministry, were converted before or after his embracement of the Gospel, and his and his Houshold's baptism, is altogether uncertain.

Thirdly observe, That suppose some particular persons in or of these Houses, said to be baptized, might be converted antecedent to their baptism, yet from thence it cannot be concluded, that in other Houses it must needs be so also; nor yet that the Houshold, as generally considered, were not baptized upon the account of the Parents faith: as suppose there were any converted in the Gaolers House antecedent to their baptism, from thence it cannot be concluded, that any in *Lydia's* House were converted antecedent to their baptism; to suppose there should be some of the Gaolers House converted before their baptism, yet to argue from thence, that Baptism was not administred to the Houses, as more generally taken, as the Houses of believing Parents, is a meer *non sequitur*: So that suppose it could be proved, which yet it cannot be, that some in or of some one or other

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of the *Houſes*, ſaid to be baptized, were baptized upon the account of their own perſonal profeſſion of Faith and Repentance, yet that would not overthrow the evidence that the Inſtances of any *Houſholds* being baptized, as a *Houſhold* of a Believer, gives in to the truth contended for; the probability of any one *Houſhold*, yea, or any one in or of any one *Houſhold*, being baptized, as the *Houſhold*, or as of the *Houſhold* of ſuch a Parent, carryes alike evidence to the truth pleaded for, as taken abſtractly in it ſelf, as it would do in caſe there were the ſame probability, that all theſe *Houſholds*, and all in them, were baptized, as ſuch *Houſholds*.

From the whole of what hath been ſaid touching theſe ſeveral Inſtances, and that as taken abſtractly in themſelves, I ſhall not doubt to conclude, that there is at leaſt a very great probability, that in primitive times *Houſes* were, together with their converted Parents, baptized, and that meerly as the *Houſes* of ſuch Parents.

And yet further, for the making it more probable, that theſe *Houſholds*, ſaid to be baptized, at leaſt ſome in or of them, were indeed baptized, not upon the account of a perſonal profeſſion of their own faith and Repentance, but upon the account of their Parents Faith, as received into the ſame Covenant-ſtate with them, let theſe things be conſidered.

First, How exceeding improbable it is, that in case none could be admitted into communion with the Body of Christ by Baptism, but upon a personal profession of Faith and Repentance, the Sacred Historian, writing by divine inspiration, would mention, and leave upon record, the baptisme of any one *Houshold*, without giving the least intimation of the conversion of at least one or more in or of that *Houshold*, that so the ground of the baptisme of the rest might have been clearly inferred. That the Covenant, together with the Sign and Token of it, should be of the same latitude and extent in the administration and application of it, that it was under the first Testament, might rationally expected by all men: hence it may be well supposed, that our Lord Jesus Christ, who is expressly said to be faithful in all his *House*, as *Moses* was in his, would if not have given some express and positive discovery of his will, as to the baptism of persons upon the personal profession of their faith and repentance, exclusive of all others, which our Opposers themselves will hardly affirm that he hath done, yet would have given in so full and clear an account of the Apostles practice in execution of their Commission, *To teach and baptize the Nations*, as should have evidently obviated all mistakes, in a case wherein mistakes so probably would be, when it is so evidently declared, that under the first Testament, upon persons taking hold of the Covenant, both themselves and *Households* were admitted and incorporated into the Body of

 Christ,

Christ, by the then Sign and Token of the Covenant, and then declared in the New, that together with Parents, upon their imbracement of the Gospel, their Households were admitted and implanted into the same Body (as the Apostle is expres's in *Ephes.* 3. 6. that the Body is one and the same) by Baptism, the present Sign or Token of the Covenant, and no account is given of the personal faith and repentance of any in or of those Houses, at least some of them, as the ground of their baptism, besides the Parents alone. Sure none can deny, but here is a rational ground to suppose, at least very probably, that the Covenant, and together therewith the Sign and Token of it, is of the same extent and latitude as it formerly was. Now I say, consider how extreamly improbable it is, that the *Holy Ghost* should record the Baptism of whole Households, taking notice only of the faith and repentance of the Parents, without giving the least intimation of the faith and repentance of any in or of such Households, thereby giving so clear a ground of mistake, in case none under the new Testament administration ought to be admitted and incorporated into the mystical Body of Christ, as visible, but upon a personal profession of their faith and repentance.

Secondly, Let it be considered, how the *Holy Ghost* doth vary his manner of expression in his narrative of those primitive transactions, when he speaks of the baptism of Households, he tells us, the Households were baptized, together

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with their *Parents*, not giving the least intimation of the faith of any in either of those *Houses*, as the ground of their baptism; but when he speaks of more general Assemblies, or concourses of people, he speaks more distinguishingly, *Then they that gladly received the Word were baptized*, *Acts* 2. 41. And why the Holy Ghost should speak so distinguishingly in one place and not in the other is hard to say, unless it should be, because in respect of such more general Assemblies and concourses of people, consisting of grown persons, the personal faith and conversion of each was necessary to their baptism, but not so in respect of the *Houses* of believing Parents, but that is for these Instances, as taken abstractly in themselves: But now compare one thing with another, and the evidence is vastly more clear; for as considering what hath been said, to prove the interest of the Infant-seed of believing Parents in the Covenant and Promises thereof, and what hath been said, to evidence a right to *Baptism* to be of equal extent to interest in the Covenant and *Promises* thereof, it is undeniable to me, and I can hardly think, but it will be so to others, who will freely entertain Light when held forth unto them, that these *Households* were baptized, as the *Houses* of such Parents, upon the account of their interest in the Covenant; so on the other hand, when we see what hath been before said, concerning the interest of believing Parents in the Covenant, and concerning their right to *Baptism* upon that account, and then find whole *Households* baptized,

baptized, and that so very probably, to say no more, as the Houses of such Parents did may much more strongly perswade us of their interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof, and of their right to the Sign and Token of the Covenant. But let that suffice for the proof of our third subordinate Proposition.

What Objections the Truth we have contended for will meet with from the contrary minded, shall now be considered.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Objections against the last Propoſition answered. The concluſion of the whole.

Object. 1. NOtwithſtanding all that hath been ſaid for the confirmation of the three foregoing Propoſitions, yet ſome may ſay, That it is not the will of Chriſt, that the Infant-ſeed of believing Parents ſhould ordinarily be baptized (may be at leaſt very probably concluded) from thoſe various paſſages that do occur in the new Teſtament; wherein ſuch things are declared to have attended the adminiſtration of Baptiſm, and ſuch things are affirmed of, and required from the baptized in the primitive times, which cannot attend Baptiſm, as adminiſtred unto Infants, nor can be truly affirmed of, or rationally required from them. See 1 *Cor.* 12. 13, 21, 25. *Epheſ.* 4. 16. *Gal.* 3. 26, 27.

Anſw. This Objection will ſoon vaniſh, and appear to have no ſtrength at all in it, if we conſider theſe three things, which becauſe they are ſo obvious to every one of a competent underſtanding, and at all acquainted with the Scriptures,

Scriptures, I ſhall need do little more than mention.

Firſt, Conſider that what in theſe or the like Scriptures is declared of, or required from the *Body* of Chriſt, or the ſeveral Members of that *Body*, as united and incorporated, by the means (whether internal or external) appointed for that end and purpoſe, agrees to, and equally concerns the whole *Body* of Chriſt, and the ſeveral Members thereof, ſimply and abſolutely, in all times and ages; the *Body* of Chriſt is but one, ſucceſſively continued throughout all ages; and hence it may as well be concluded from theſe Scriptures, that Infants never were, nor ever ſhall be admitted into this *Body*, (the contrary whereunto is moſt evident) as that in the primitive times they were not, by Baptiſm, admitted into it, as then exiſtent in the world.

Secondly, Conſider that it is a thing of frequent occurrence in Scripture, for things to be declared and ſpoken of, or to whole *Bodies* or Societies, and that in the moſt univerſal and indefinite terms, which yet are to be underſtood and applyed variouſly, with reſpect to the particulars, according to their reſpective capacities and concernments, in what is ſo declared or ſpoken: See this abundantly verified in that Speech of *Moſes* to the whole Congregation of *Iſrael*, recorded in the twenty nine and thirty Chapters of *Deuteronomy*, there are ſome things ſpoken as univerſally true of them all; as their ſtanding before the Lord, in order to their re-

newal

renewal of their Covenant with him, thus, *Deut.* 29. 10, 11, 12, there are other things spoken, which were alone true of the grown persons among them, and that but in part true of some of them, in whole true of others: Thus their seeing what God had done for them in *Egypt*, and in the Wilderness, some had seen both the temptations they had been tried with, and the Signs wrought before them in the Wilderness, but had seen nothing, in respect of a personal sight, of what God had done for them in *Egypt*: Others had seen what God had done both in the Wilderness and in *Egypt*, and yet the same things are universally declared of them all, verse 2. So again, there are other things affirmed and declared of them all in one and the same expression, which yet were to be understood in a different manner, as applyed to particulars: Thus of their entring into Covenant, it is said of them universally, *They stood before the Lord to enter into Covenant*, and yet they could not enter into it after one and the same manner, the grown persons were to do it personally, the Infants and Children, incapable of a personal covenanting with God, were entred by their Parents. Yet take one more instance, that Command, to keep the words of that Covenant they were now entring into, is imposed upon them all universally, verse 9. *Keep therefore the words of this Covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that you do.* Yet who will say, either that there were no Infants, or that Infants are capable to keep the

words

words of that Covenant? So that we may see how variously, what is indefinitely, and in the most general and universal terms spoken to one of an Assembly, or united Body of people, as collectively or generally taken, is yet to be understood and applyed to the particulars of that Assembly or Body of people. And several other Instances, of a like nature with this might be given; See 1 *Cor* 10. begin. but I am willing to contract as much as may be. Thus in respect of the passages the Objection is grounded upon, what is declared to have attended the administration of Baptism, or what is spoken of or to the persons baptized, is to be understood and applied to particulars, according to their respective capacities and concernments in what is so declared and spoken.

Thirdly, Let it be considered, to whom, or for whose use the Scriptures were written, as also what is the special design of the Holy Ghost in those passages the Objection is grounded upon: And thus let it be considered, that the Scriptures were written to and for the use not of Infants, while in their infant capacity, but grown persons: and the design of the Holy Ghost, in the places mentioned, is either to instruct and establish in some necessary truth, or press to some necessary duty; and hence what in the forementioned passages is spoken upon the Body of Christ, and the several Members of that Body, only concerns such persons, and is of special use to the promotion of the design aimed at in them; but that is no Argument that

Infants,

Infants, to whom theſe things agree not, and who are not concerned as ſuch in them, nor are capable of improving them to the end intended, were not of that Body, and conſequently not admitted into it by Baptiſm, eſpecially when the mind of Chriſt is fully revealed in other places as to that matter.

Object. 2. But the main and principal Objection, and indeed which hath any conſiderable appearance of weight in it, is that raiſed from *Mat.* 28. 19. compared with *Mark* 16. 15, 16. where the inſtitution of Baptiſm, as is ſuppoſed by many, a Commiſſion authorizing and requiring the adminiſtration of it among the Gentiles, as is granted by all is recorded. Now ſay our Oppoſers, Infant baptiſm cannot be according to the will of Chriſt, in as much as it agrees not with the inſtitution of Baptiſm: the inſtitution warrants the teaching and baptizing the Nations, that is, ſay the Objectors, ſuch of the Nations as are taught, and by teaching made Diſciples, but here is not a word concerning the Baptiſm of *Infants*. Now ſay they, certainly had it been the will of Chriſt that Infants ſhould have been baptized, he would have ſo expreſſed the inſtitution, as that his mind ſhould have been plainly and clearly held forth therein, touching this matter; but here not being the leaſt intimation that it is his will that they ſhould be baptized, therefore their Baptiſm cannot rationally be judged to be according to his will.

Anſw.

Answ. I shall not debate the Question, whether this of *Matthew* be, or may be, fitly called the, or an institution of *Baptism*, either absolutely, or unto us Gentiles, though let me say, it seems something strange to me, how it comes to bear the denomination of the institution of *Baptism*, seeing *Baptism* was in use long before this Command was given out, and certainly the Administrators of it would not act without an institution, neither do I think it can properly be called the institution of *Baptism* to us Gentiles. I doubt not, but this was only a Commission given out by Christ to his Apostles, and in them to all the Ministers of the Gospel, authorizing and enjoyning them to administer those two Ordinances, of preaching the Gospel and Baptism, afore instituted, in such an extensive way, as is here expressed in the administration of which Ordinances the Administrators were and are to be regulated, not only by the letter of this Commission, but by all other directions Christ himself had, or yet should give them, relating to that their administration: But let that pass, call it the institution of *Baptism*, absolutely or respectively to us Gentiles, or a Commission, it is much at one as to my present purpose: As for the Objection as afore laid down, a brief answer may suffice: Two things, I suppose, are and will be granted by the generality of, if not universally by all our Opposers.

First, That this Institution or Commission, call it which you will, doth not of it self necessarily exclude Infants from partaking of the Ordinance of *Baptism*.

Secondly, That this institution or Commission doth warrant, yea, injoyn the application of Baptisme to all those our Lord Jesus Christ hath in his Word declared, that it is his will they should be baptized.

Now let but these two things be granted, and I have what I desire, having, as I judge, sufficiently evidenced, that Baptism was practised in primitive times by the Apostles themselves, and by others, by their allowance, direction and approbation, which whether I have done or no, I shall leave to the judgment of all judicious and impartial Readers, so that I might dismiss this Objection, the framers of it granting what I contend for: but yet because I find this Objection so much insisted upon, and accounted, by those of the ablest parts among our Opposers, to be the main and principal Objection, to oppose that practice of Infant-baptism we have hitherto pleaded for, I shall take it a little further into consideration, and see what strength it hath in it: and I find three things in a special manner urged, as giving strength to it.

First, That that Relative αὐτοὺς, *them*, in this Commission, must refer to Disciples, included in the Verb μαθητεύσατε, translated by our Translators teach, by others, Disciple, or make Disciples, and not to ἔθνη, Nations.

Secondly, That Infants being incapable of teaching, cannot be, nor in any propriety of speech said to be, Disciples.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, That this inſtitution or Commiſſion is to be underſtood excluſively, as excluding all from a rightful participation in that Ordinance of Baptiſm, who are not comprehended in it; and hence the ſum of what is urged from this inſtitution or Commiſſion, againſt the practice of Infant-baptiſm, amounts to thus much, That the Subjects appointed by Chriſt to be baptized, being Diſciples, and Infants not being, nor rightly to be called Diſciples, and all others beſides Diſciples being excluded from Baptiſm, by Chriſts appointing of them as the proper Subjects of that Ordinance; therefore Infants neither may nor ought to be baptized: And thus, I conceive, we ſee the utmoſt ſtrength of this Objection.

For anſwer, I ſhall a little diſtinctly conſider theſe three things giving ſtrength to it.

And for the firſt, That αὐτοὺς, them, muſt refer not to ἔθνη, Nations, but to the Noun Diſciples, included in the Verb μαθητεύσατε, to teach as its Antecedent or Subſtantive.

This I deny, and affirm on the contrary, that it ought to be referred to Nations, and not to Diſciples, ſuppoſed to be included in that Verb, and that for two Reaſons.

Firſt, Becauſe we ought to keep to the literal and plain Grammatical conſtruction of a Text, where there is no neceſſary Reaſon to inforce a recuſion from it: Now according to the literal and plain Grammatical conſtruction of theſe words, they muſt refer to Nations, whether

we translate that Verb, teach or make Disciples, saith *Christ*, teach all Nations, or make all Nations Disciples, baptizing them: *Baptizing* whom? Why, the Nations, who according to this Commission of Christ are to be taught, or made Disciples: And here is no necessary reason why we should recede from the most literal and plain Grammatical construction of the words; what reason is pretended shall be taken notice of by and by.

Secondly, *Because* it is doubtful, whether the Noun Disciples, supposed to be implyed in the Verb μαθητευσατε, were eyed by our Saviour in this Commission; what is affirmed in this matter, is affirmed mainly, if not only upon the conceit of a Critticism, concerning the signification of that word, *viz.* That it must needs signifie, to teach *cum effectu*, or to teach till the persons taught become Disciples: But now whether this Critticism were attended to by Christ, or whether he useth the word in that sense or no, is altogether uncertain: We see evidently *Mark* useth another word in setting down this Commission, *Go preach the Gospel to every Creature*, which, say our Opposers, answers this, *Go teach all Nations*; which if true, we may read the Commission thus, Go preach the Gospel to every Creature, or to all Nations, baptizing them; and then there can be no other antecedent, but the Creatures or Nations to be taught; and it is certain, the Gospel may be preached where no saving effect is produced by it, in those to whom it is preached; so that to

leave

leave the plain Grammatical and moſt literal conſtruction of the words, and to ground a conſtruction upon a ſuppoſed Critticiſm, whereas it is wholly uncertain, whether Chriſt eyed any ſuch Critticiſm or no, as uſing that word in this Commiſſion, is altogether unſafe, and therefore, I ſay, Nations, not Diſciples, muſt be the antecedent to αὐτὸς, them, injoyned by this Commiſſion to be baptized: But ſome Reaſons are urged to prove a neceſſity of taking Diſciples, as included in that Verb, as the Antecedent to them.

The firſt is this, Becauſe it is ſaid that Chriſt (*viz.* by his Diſciples) made Diſciple and baptized, *John* 4. 1. therefore μαθητευειν muſt be in this place underſtood of making Diſciples alſo.

But to that I anſwer, That though Chriſt and his Diſciples did by preaching make Diſciples, yet all that they preached to were not made Diſciples; they preached the Goſpel to many who were not thereby made Diſciples: hence it will not follow, that becauſe Chriſt and his Diſciples made ſome, yea many Diſciples, by preaching, therefore the Apoſtles, and other Miniſters of the Goſpel, were injoyned by this Commiſſion to teach, *cum effectu*, in reſpect of all they were to teach: That they were and are to endeavour to teach ſo, as that the Word may be effectual, and Hearers may be made Diſciples, is unqueſtionable; but that they ſhould be enjoyned ſo to preach, as that the uneffectualneſs of their Doctrine ſhould be their ſin, as it ſeems to be, in caſe Chriſt eyed that Critticiſm, can be

no way inferred from this ſucceſs vouchſafed to their Miniſtry, while exerciſed among the Jews.

But ſecondly, Though the Diſciples did baptiſe the Diſciples made by their preaching, yet it is not ſaid, they baptiſed only Diſciples; that Diſciples are to be baptized, ſuppoſe their caſe be the ſame with thoſe there mentioned, is unqueſtionable; but that they only are to be baptized, is not in the leaſt intimated: So that from this expreſſion in *John*, it cannot with any ſhew of reaſon be concluded, that Chriſt had an eye to that aforementioned Criticiſm, in that word uſed by him in this Commiſſion; nor if he had, that yet Diſciples muſt needs be the Antecedent to them; the words may be as well read, Diſciple all Nations, or make all Nations Diſciples, baptizing them, and yet Nations, not Diſciples, be the Antecedent to them.

Secondly, Another Reaſon to enforce the ſence pleaded for by our Oppoſers, is this, becauſe that ſence ſeems beſt to agree with the words of *Mark*, *Mark* 16. 15, 16. where this Commiſſion is thus expreſt, *Go preach the Goſpel to every Creature*; which, ſay our Oppoſers, anſwers this phraſe, *Go teach all Nations*; *he that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved*, which anſwers, ſay they, *baptizing them*: hence they infer, that the Subjects of Baptiſm are Diſciples, and theſe Diſciples muſt be Believers.

But to that I anſwer, That there is no neceſſity of our ſo interpreting the one Evangeliſt by the other; we may, conjoyning both together conceive

conceive the whole Commission, as thus given out by Christ; *Go ye therefore, teach all Nations, baptizing them*; I say, *Go preach the Gospel to every Creature; He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned*: And then as in these words recorded by *Mark*, *Preach the Gospel to every Creature*, Christ explained himself, as to the extensiveness of his meaning, in that phrase, *All Nations*, used by *Matthew*: So in the latter clause, *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; he that believeth not, shall be damned*: Christ informs them what the issue of their discharge of their Commission should be, in regard of the Nations to be taught, or Creatures, to whom the Gospel should be preached by them, those that should believe, and be baptized, should be saved, but those that believed not, however they might be baptized, yet they should be damned; which must needs, according to the unanimous consent of our Opposers, be understood of the adult; whence it will follow, that *Mark* speaks not at all of the Subjects of Baptism, but of the issue of the Apostles discharging their whole Commission, both in respect of preaching and baptizing, in respect of those towards whom they should discharge it, in case they should receive the Gospel preached, or through the preaching of the Gospel should believe, and were baptized, then they should be saved; but though they had the Gospel never so faithfully preached to them, yea, though they might so far imbrace it, as to submit to Baptism, yet unless

they believe, they should, notwithstanding that, be damned.

Thirdly, It is yet further urged, that in case αὐτὸς, them, did refer unto ἔθνη, Nations without any limitation, then this Commission would warrant the baptism of any Person or Nation in the world, whether taught or no, which it is rightly said, we our selves acknowledge ought not to be.

To this the answer is at hand, 'Tis true, it would do so in case there were no other directions in any other part of the Scriptures, for the Ministers of the Gospel to regulate themselves by in the discharge of this Commission; but this supposed evil consequence is sufficiently obviated in other places of Scripture, where the right Subjects of Baptism are sufficiently declared, *viz.* grown persons, in case they were not afore baptized upon their faith and repentance, and with them their Infant-seed; and this, I conceive, is the very design of Christ in this Commission, to authorize, yea, enjoyn the preaching of the Gospel, and administration of *Baptism* to the whole world, by persons duly called to administer Gospel Ordinances unto men, yet so as to regulate themselves, in respect of both the one and the other, by such directions and limitations as himself had or should give, in relation to a due administration of both Ordinances; and that the Disciples and Ministers of the Gospel were and are to regulate themselves in the dispensing the Gospel unto men, as well in the administration of *Baptism*, by other Rules

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afore or after given by Christ, is sufficiently evident throughout the new Testament; so that notwithstanding what is urged to the contrary. I conceive, it is fully evident, that *them* in this Commission, specifying the Subjects of Baptism, refers to Nations, not to Disciples, as its Antecedent.

Now having discovered the uncertainty, yea, falsity of this first Principle asserted, and laid as a foundation to the Objection proposed, the Objection is so far enervated, as that little need be added to the other two things, from which, in conjunction with this, it receives the whole of what strength it hath.

And therefore secondly, as to what is asserted in the second place, *viz.* That Infants neither are, nor can in propriety of speech be called Disciples, it concerns not me; it is enough, as to my present purpose, that they may be comprehended under that phrase, *All Nations*; I shall therefore only say, that I cannot but conceive, that will men judge impartially, suppose we should grant, that *them* in this Commission of Christ doth refer to Disciples, and not to Nations, and consequently that Disciples are the proper Subjects of Baptism; yet they must acknowledge, that what hath been said by others to prove, that Infants may and ought, according to Scripture account, be numbred among the Disciples of Christ, renders this Objection wholly insufficient to counterballance the evidence produced from other Scriptures, for the establishment of the practice now

pleaded

pleaded for, which is all at present I contend for.

And therefore thirdly, As for that Assertion, That this Institution or Commission is to be understood exclusively, and consequently, that none are to be baptized, but such whose baptism is in express terms warranted by it. I shall only say it is true, we ought so to understand it, in case we had no other Scriptures for our direction in the administration of Baptism, but take this Commission or Institution absolutely in it self, and the not including Infants in it, is not an excluding of them out of it. We see here Christ speaks immediately and directly to his Disciples, *Go ye therefore, &c.* none besides them are expresly included in it, and shall we say therefore that this Commission only concerned them? Surely no, it is a Commission for all that at that time, or in after Ages, should be called forth by Christ to minister in the Gospel; so it will not follow, suppose Disciples be the Antecedent to them, that therefore none else are to be baptized: As for what Instances are brought of Commands, expresst only positively, & yet interpreted by all Interpreters exclusively, as *1 Cor.* 11. 28. and the like, the Reason is, because no other Scriptures allow any others, but such there spoken of, to partake of that Ordinance there spoken of, otherwise the bare commanding persons to examine themselves, in order to their due receiving of that Ordinance, doth not of it self exclude all others from it, that do not, or cannot examine themselves; so that I say, the Institu-

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tion or Commission, as abstractedly taken, doth not exclude all from the participation of this Ordinance of Baptism, who are not in expreſs terms comprehended in it, which is all that I contend for; and as I have ſaid, I ſuppoſe will be granted on all hands; ſo that ſhould we grant, that *them* is to be referred to Diſciples, included in that Verb, and that Infants are not Scripture Diſciples, neither of which, notwithſtanding all that is ſaid by our Oppoſers, is granted, our Propoſition may ſtand firm, for though Infants are not expreſly included in the Commiſſion, yet they are not excluded out of it, therefore their Baptiſm muſt ſtand or fall by the evidence of other Scriptures, and we having ſufficient evidence from other Scriptures, that it is the will of Chriſt that they ſhould be baptized, their not being expreſly mentioned in the Commiſſion, ought to be no Remora in the way of our thankful imbracement of what light he hath elſewhere given of his mind and will in this matter.

Object. 3. There is an Objection or Argument, which ſome ſeem to conceive to have a very great ſtrength in it, yea, to be unanſwerable, which is carried on gradually to this iſſue, ſay the Framers of it, Seeing there is no expreſs Command requiring the *Baptiſm* of Infants, the practice muſt needs be deduced only in a conſequential way from the Scriptures: Now to prove that it cannot be rightly and duly deduced from any Scripture in a conſequential way, ſo as that

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the omiſſion of it ſhould be a ſin in the Parents, (and their ſin it muſt be if it be a ſin at all) againſt any Law of Chriſt, it is thus argued;

If the omiſſion or neglect of the Baptiſm of Infants were a ſin chargeable upon their Parents, as being a tranſgreſſion of ſome Divine Law, then ſome one or other, at one time or other would in Scripture have been commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it; But no one, at any time whatſoever, is in Scripture either commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it; Therefore the omiſſion of it cannot be a ſin chargeable upon the Parents, as a breach of ſome divine Law.

Which Argument laid down catagorically muſt run thus.

Whatever practice is conſequentially deduced from Scripture, in caſe it be from Heaven, ſome one or other, at one time or other, hath been commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it: But no one was ever commended for the practice of Infant-baptiſm, nor blamed for the neglect of it; Therefore it cannot be from Heaven, but muſt needs be of men.

And for the proof of the Major Propoſition, ſeveral Inſtances are produced of Duties conſequentially drawn, in reſpect of which we find, that ſome one or other, at ſome time or other, hath been commended for the practice of them, or blamed for the neglect of them: thus, if I miſtake not, that action of *Phinehas*, in ſlaying

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Zimri and *Cosbi*, recorded *Numb.* 25. 6, 7, 8. is produced as one Instance, and variety of other Instances are reckoned up.

Answ. In answer to this Objection, or Argument, I shall say in general, that were it not for the high conceit some have of it, and that the sudden proposal of it, especially in the heat of disputation, when the mind, variously distracted cannot alwayes suddenly recal it self to a due weighing of what is proposed, may for a little while seem to puzzle such, who yet upon a little serious review of it will soon discern the extream vanity of it, *I* should wholly pass it by, as not thinking it worthy an answer, the weakness of it so evidently appearing to all considerate persons; but seeing it is supposed to be of such strength, for the opposing the practice I have hitherto pleaded for, I have judged it meet, to take it into consideration, and as previous to a direct Answer to it, I shall premise these two Questions.

First, Whether it be necessary, for the determining whether any controverted practice be from Heaven or of Men, that this commendation or discommendation, of persons practising or neglecting of it, should be expresly, or in plain words, declared in Scripture? or whether it be not sufficient, that they themselves may be consequentially, and by way of Argument, drawn and deduced from Scripture.

Secondly, Whether it be necessary that this commendation or discommendation, pleaded to

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be so necessary for the end mentioned, must be contained in some Scripture distinct from those the practice controverted is deduced from, or whether it may not be sufficient that they are contained in some Scriptures, which yet may be urged to give countenance to the practice under debate? And let the Framers of this Argument answer to these Questions, as they conceive most conducing to the end designed in it.

These two Questions being premised, let us come more directly to the Answer, and it may be answered several wayes, according to the Answer our Opposers shall give to the foregoing Questions.

First, Suppose it shall be said, That it is sufficient to determine any controverted practise to be from Heaven, in case it can be consequentially, or rationally deduced from any Scripture whatsoever, whether urged to give countenance to the practice controverted or no, That some one or other, at one time or another, hath been commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it: Then I shall answer these two things.

First, I deny the Minor Proposition, and say, that we have Instances of persons commended for the practice of Infant-baptism, take these Instances, of *Lydia*, the Gaoler, and others.

But it is replyed, It doth not appear that they had any Infants baptized, and therefore *Luke*'s telling us, that they and their Houshold were baptized, cannot be interpreted as a commenda-

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tion to them for practising of Infant-baptisme.

But to that I answer, *Lis sub judice est*, we judge they had, our Opposers judge they had not: And who shall be Judge in this case? Surely neither we nor our Opposers, being both parties in the case controverted. And therefore,

Secondly, I say, That this Argument leaves the Controversie as it found it, and is of no use at all for the end designed in it; Its design is to prove, that the practice of Infant-baptism is not from Heaven, but of men, and it leaves it as doubtful, whether it be from Heaven or of men, as it was before; for notwithstanding such commendations or discommendations may be produced the way allowed in this Answer, yet the practice will be doubtful, and the Reason is evident, because it may be doubted, whether these commendations or discommendations are rightly and duly deduced from Scripture or no. And therefore,

Secondly, I suppose the Objectors or Argumentators must needs say, That such a commendation or discommendation, as is required, must be declared and expressed in some plain and express Scripture, or the consequence be drawn so evidently, as amounts to a plain and express Scripture; but then how extreamly ridiculous the Argument is, will soon appear to every ordinary capacity; and the Major may be justly denied, and that for a fourfold Reason.

First,

First, It is evidently false, there are some practises consequentially drawn, owned, and practised by our Opposers, as well as by our selves, respective unto which no one *Instance* can be produced of any, either commended for the practice of them, or discommended for the neglect of them: That Instance of Womens receiving the Lords Supper is obvious, that practice is only warranted in a consequential way; for where is any express Command to warrant it? And let any such Instance, as agrees with the sence of the Oponent in the Major Proposition be produced of any Woman, that is in Scripture commended for the practice of it, or discommended for the neglect of it.

Secondly, This Argument involves the Authors of it in an absolute contradiction, considering what is and must rationally be granted by them, for the practice the Argument makes head against, must rationally be granted to be controvertible, or a practice that rational men may differ in their judgments about, some conceiving it is from Heaven, others conceiving it is from Men. Now let it be carefully observed, that supposing there were any plain Scripture expresly declaring, that some one or other had been commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it, how could it be controvertible among wise and rational men? Sure the producing of such a Scripture would put it out of all question, among those that will be guided by Scripture light; so that this Argument doth imply, either that a controverti-

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ble practice may be ſo evidently declared in Scripture, as to admit of no controverſie about it, or elſe that there is no ſuch thing as a controvertible practice in *rerum natura*, which is an eaſie way of deciding all Controverſies; for as for duties plainly expreſt and declared in Scripture, no wiſe man will move a controverſie about them; and as for practiſes conſequentially drawn, the way is moſt obvious, to determine whether they are from Heaven or of men; if from Heaven, ſome one at one time or other would have been in Scripture either commended for the practice of them, or blamed for the neglect of them; if no ſuch commendation or diſcommendation be extant in Scripture, than they are infallibly of men: Now ſurely it may eaſily be found out, whether there be extant any ſuch commendation or diſcommendation, reſpective to any Religious practiſes whatſoever, ſo that were this Objection or Argument worthy of any notice to be taken of it, we ſhould ſoon have an end of all our Controverſies among all ſober Chriſtians. But

Thirdly, Suppoſe no practice could be inſtanced in beſides that in controverſie that is from Heaven, but hath received its atteſtation from God, one of the wayes mentioned in this Argument; and ſuppoſe the Framers of it were not involved by it, in ſuch a contradiction as afore declared, yet, I ſay, the proof is wholly inſufficient. For

First, The Inſtances produced for the proof of it are wholly impertinent, as to the thing to

be proved; for obſerve it, what is that which ought to be proved, in caſe the Argument make any oppoſition againſt the practice pleaded for? It is this, that all thoſe practices that are deduced from Scripture only in a conſequential way, and on that account are controverted among rational men, ought to have a Teſtimonial from God of their being from him, in caſe they are ſo, by his either ſomewhere in Scripture commending ſome one or other for the practice of them, or blaming ſome one or other for the neglect of them; if this be not proved, the practice of Infant-baptiſm, though deduced only in a conſequential way, may be from Heaven, notwithſtanding none have ever either been commended for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it.

Now mark, what do theſe Inſtances produced prove only this, that ſome practiſes may be lawful, which yet are deduced only conſequentially from Scripture, in as much as ſome have been commended for practiſing upon that ground, others have been blamed for the neglect of practiſing Duties ſo deduceable, *Et quid hoc ad rhombum*, what is that to the purpoſe? the Inſtances, if pertinent to the purpoſe for which they are brought, ſhould be of practices produced, as afore expreſt, which Antecedent to a lawful practiſe of them, have received ſome ſuch teſtimonial from God of his approbation of them by the wayes mentioned.

Secondly, Suppoſe we ſhould grant (which yet we by no means can do) that theſe Inſtances were

were pertinent, yet who can say the enumeration is full and compleat, yea, it is evident it is vastly deficient, for notwithstanding we find such and such practises owned to be from God, by the commendation he hath given to some one or other for the practising of them, or by the blame he hath laid upon others for the neglect of them: Yet who can say, but that some duties and practices might have been duly deduced in a consequential way, from some discovery that God had afore made of his will, in respect of which there is no one Instance throughout the whole Scripture, of any one practising of them, nor mention made of any ones neglect of them? Shall we think, that no more duties were deducable from the several Laws, whether Moral or Ceremonial, or Judicial, then some have been commended for the practice of, or others have been blamed for the neglect of? It would be most irrational to suppose it. For any to infer, that because such and such have been commended for the practice of such duties, which they have consequentially drawn from some antecedent discoveries of the will of God, or others have been blamed for the neglect of others that might have been consequentially drawn, therefore whatever practice is duly inferred, by consequence would have its attestation from God one of those wayes, in case it were indeed from him, is as unreasonable an Inference, as well can be drawn by any man that hath the use of his own Reason.

Fourthly, I answer, That the Instances mentioned for the proof of the Major Proposition, are so far from proving that, the confirmation of which is designed by them, that they do indeed prove the quite contrary: The thing to be proved is this, That all such practises as are deduced consequentially from Scripture, in case they be from heaven, as the pleaders for them pretend them to be, would be declared so to be by some commendation recorded in Scripture, that God at one time or other had given to some one or other for practising of them, or by some reproof, that he at one time or other had given for the neglect of them.

Now for the proof of this, several Instances are brought of practises deduceable only in a consequential way, in regard of which, we read how God hath commended some for the practice of them, and blamed others for the neglect of them.

Now let these Instances be well weighed, and we shall see they prove the quite contrary to that, the confirmation whereof they are designed unto, namely, That a practice that is only consequentially drawn from Scripture, may be lawful, yea, a duty, though none have antecedently been ever commended by God for the practice of it, or blamed for the neglect of it. Take that action of *Phinehas* in slaying *Zimri* and *Cozbi*, and suppose *Phinehas* to have deduced his duty in that particular only by way of consequence, from some antecedent discovery of the will of God: Now it is evident, that *Phinehas* doth

doth perform that duty, and was accepted of God in it, as only ſo conſequentially deduced, without any approbation of it from God, either of the wayes before mentioned, was there any one at any time, either commended for killing *Zimri* and *Cosbi*, or for killing any others upon the like occaſion, and yet we ſee *Phinehas* only deducing his duty in a conſequential way, is faithful in it, and is accepted and rewarded of God; and the like will be found true of all other Inſtances of the like nature, produced for the ſame end and purpoſe: And thus ſuppoſe the practice of Infant-baptiſm were only deduced in a conſequential way, and no one were ever commended for the practiſe of it, nor any ever blamed for the neglect of it, yet it may be ſafely practiſed, and none need, upon the account of the want of ſuch Inſtances as is required, queſtion their acceptation with God; we have the Inſtance of *Phinehas*, and other of a like nature, for our warrant and incouragement, becauſe Saints have formerly been accepted, and highly rewarded for the doing of that their duty, which they could only infer in a conſequential way, and if we, following of them, do indeed rightly infer our duty, and faithfully practiſe it, we ſhall be alike accepted of God, and not miſs of our reward. From all that hath been ſaid, we may ſee the unreaſonableneſs of this Argument, and were it not for the Reaſons aforementioned, I ſhould have judged it rather worthy of contempt than a ſerious anſwer.

These Objections being answered, I conceive, I may with safety and security to the Truth pleaded for, come to a close, only whereas it is by *Antipædobaptists* usually queried, What can we rationally suppose can be the end of our Lord Jesus Christ, in appointing the application of Baptism to Infants while in their infancy? Or what good can accrew unto them by it, seeing it is certain they understand not what is done unto them, neither are they capable of making any present improvement of it?

I judge it necessary to offer something for their satisfaction, wherein yet I shall, on the account elsewhere mentioned, be very brief, and all that I shall say at present is this, That take Baptism, as the Sign, Token, or Seal of the Covenant, as it ought to be taken, and answerably applyed upon that ground, *viz.* their interest in the Covenant and Promises thereof, and as serving to, and performing those various uses and ends, with reference to which a Sign or Token in the general is annexed to the Covenant; And so I say, that as there were mighty ends of our Lord Jesus, his appointing the application of it to the Infant-seed of believing Parents, so exceeding much good doth and, were it rightly and duly improved by them, as they grew up to a capacity inabling them thereunto, vastly more would accrew unto them thereby.

I shall give this one Instance, and that is Its useful subservency to their preservation in that Covenant-state, into which they, as the

Seeds,

Seed of ſuch Parents, were afore admitted, and conſequently to the injoyment of all the good benefits and bleſſings of the Covenant, and the uſeful ſubſervency Baptiſm hath to this great end lyes in this, that thereby the Seed of Believers are anticipated in their choice of what God they will ſerve, and what way they will walk in.

For the clearing up of this let it be obſerved, that youth is ordinarily mans chuſing time; hence whereas we read in *Eccleſ.* 12. 1. *Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth. Arius Montanus* in his *Interlineal* reads, *In diebus electionum tuarum*, in the dayes of thy chuſing; the word comes from a Root, which properly ſignifies, *elegit, ſelegit*, hence the Subſtantive, by a Metaphor, is uſed to ſignifie a Youth or a young Man, either becauſe of the fitneſs of youth for ſervice, upon which account ſuch are uſually choſen out for ſpecial ſervice, whence is that frequent phraſe in Scripture, *of choſen men*, ſpeaking of Souldiers, or men appointed for war, or elſe becauſe youth is the ſpecial time of mans choice; Man ſo ſoon as capable of reflecting upon himſelf, and perceiving his own indigency, as to that happineſs his natural make and conſtitution renders him capable of, is forc'd to look out and caſt about him, for the gaining from without ſuch a ſupply as may compenſate that indigency he finds himſelf to lye under, and no ſooner doth man begin to look abroad into the world, but as variety of objects; ſo variety of wayes and courſes of life occur to his mind and thoughts,

from whence he may conceive a hope of furnishing himself with those supplies; and as in the general, a Deity, with the wayes and means of his worship and service, and the world, with the various wayes and means of gaining and injoying that, become Competitors in his choice; So seeing to all Nations, nor to all people in each Nation, there is not one and the same God, nor one and the same way of worshipping & serving him, & seeing there are variety of particular Objects in the world, & various ways and means of gaining and injoying this or that particular Object, hence he hath variety of choice, when in the general he is come to a resolution with himself, whether it shall be by the worship and service of a Deity, or by the gaining and injoying the world, he will attempt his own happiness, and according as the mind is swayed towards, at least so as to fix upon this or that object, or this or that way or course, such usually at least frequently, is the man throughout his whole life and conversation, take it of the things of the world in general, as coming in competition with a Deity, with the way and means of his worship and service, if the mind be swayed towards the world, so as to fix upon that, the man usually lives an irreligious life, and prosecutes the world and the things of that throughout his whole life; but now if it please the Lord to open the eyes, and shew the Soul himself, and effectually draw and incline the mind to himself and his wayes, with the benefit and advantages of chusing, serving and wor-

shipping him, it is unto God and his wayes of worship and service that the man applyes himself, as the only way to attain unto happines. So take it of any particular object in the world, or any particular way or course of life, according as the mind fixes at the first, so is the man throughout his whole life and conversation. Now, I say, 'tis in youth at least usually, that the mind of man pitches upon this or that object, this or that way or course, afterwards prosecuted, or after taken and walked in throughout the following part of his life; hence it is found, at least very frequently, as for those who injoy the means of Grace in their youth, if they are not then wrought upon to close in with God in Christ his wayes and worship, as the only way to attain unto happiness, they are seldom ever wrought upon.

Now here is an eminent expression of the goodness of God to his people, that as he hath extended his Covenant to their Seed, so he hath ordained the application of the Sign and Token of the Covenant unto their Seed as well as to themselves; that he might thereby anticipate their choice, that when they come to look abroad into the world, they may find themselves afore well provided for in their interest in God, and find themselves preobliged to take God in Christ as their God and portion, and to walk in his wayes, they find themselves not left at liberty to chuse what God they please, or walk how or in what way themselves please, but they find themselves afore dedicated and given up to

God

God in Christ, as his people, and obliged and engaged by Baptism to cleave unto him, and to walk in his wayes, and supposing them by those upon whom that concern is incumbent, instructed in this Obligation they are prevented by, and what is the danger of breaking of it, their baptism hath a most useful subserviency to the preservation of their Covenant-state, and consequently their injoyment of all the good, blessings and benefits of the Covenant. And let me add thus much more, That Baptism having a blessing annexed to the administration of it, is one of those means, supposing the party baptized come to make a due improvement of it, that God doth make use of effectually to incline the heart of the Seed of Believers, to a right and willing complyance with that Obligation put upon them by it; and by this little hint we may easily perceive, that God had weighty ends in injoyning the application of Baptism, the present Token of the Covenant, as well as Circumcision of old, the then Token of the Covenant to the Infant-seed of his People; and that the application of it is of admirable use and benefit unto them, when duly improved by them; and certainly then it must needs be not only highly injurious to the Seed of believing Parents, to withhold the Token of the Covenant from them, they being thereby deprived of a special means, subservient to their preservation, in their Covenant-state and injoyment of all the good of the Covenant, but exceeding prejudicial to the interest of Christ in the world, the Tabernacle

of

of *David* as we have before proved, is raised up, and upheld among the Gentiles, by Gods taking Families into Covenant with himself: Now to neglect a special means that God hath appointed, subservient to the preservation of these Families in their Covenant state, must needs directly tend to the ruine and overthrow of the interest and Kingdom of Christ in the world: But not to inlarge upon this at present.

From this little that hath been said we may easily perceive, that the application of Baptism to the Infant seed of Believers, is no such vain or useless thing, as it is by two many supposed.

I have only a few more words to add, as a *Coronis* to the whole foregoing Discourse, and I have done.

That it is the will of our Lord Christ, that the Infant-seed of one or both believing Parents should be baptized, is to me, upon the grounds afore laid down, unquestionable; how far it will be so to others I cannot say; only this *I* know, that whatever light is held forth by man, for the discovery of the mind and will of Christ, relating to any practice, yet unless he, who is the great Propher of his Church, shall vouchsafe to open the eyes of the mind, and prevail upon the heart to imbrace and submit unto that light held forth, the holding of it forth will be wholly insignificant, as to any benefit accrewing therefrom unto men. Man may, according to what assistance is vouchsafed from Christ, hold forth light discovering the way he would have his People walk in, but it is wholly in his own

power,

power, whose Prerogative it is to lead into all Truth, to inlighten the mind, and cause the Soul to walk in that way: Leaving therefore the whole of what hath been said in his hand, and to his blessing, I shall wind up all with a three-fold advice, according to the various sentiments of men about, and their various concerments in the practice *I* have contended for.

First, As for such who have been, and notwithstanding what is here offered, or hath been by others, shall still remain to be so far dissatisfied about the practice we plead for, as wholly to omit it, and walk in that way that lyes in a direct opposition thereunto, let me advise, and in the Spirit of meekness earnestly beseech them to carry it, under their present persuasions, and practise with a holy fear and trembling. The grounds held forth in the foregoing Treatise, and by several others, pleading for the same Truth, seem so full and clear, yea, to me so convincing, that *I* can hardly fear being accounted over confident; though *I* take it for granted, that the most confident and resolved of our Opposers must needs acknowledge, that our doctrine and practice of *Infant* baptism stands upon the same level of probability, if the advantage be not on our side, that the opposite Doctrine and practise doth, and that upon supposition of our Doctrine and practice being found agreeable to the mind and will of Christ, the opposite Doctrine and practice must needs be highly prejudicial to the comfort of believing Parents, the good of their Seed, and which is

most

moſt of all, to the ſupportation and propagation of the intereſt and Kingdom of Chriſt in the world. And let me add, that when the conſequences of refuſing or claiming a priviledge are of an even ſize, the refuſing ſuch a priviledge, ſuppoſe it be indeed granted, and ought to be accepted of, is a greater ſin, and more diſpleaſing unto God, than the claiming and appropriating of it, ſuppoſing it be not granted, nor that claim really warranted by Scripture is, as is evident to every conſiderate perſon: we ſee how much God was offended at *Ahaz* his refuſing a Sign when offered to him; how much God was diſpleaſed with *Moſes* for neglecting to circumciſe his Child: therefore, I ſay, walk with a holy fear and trembling, leſt as ſome will meet with a *Who required this at your hand?* ſo you ſhall meet with a *How durſt thou refuſe this priviledge at my hand?*

Secondly, As for ſuch whoſe judgment and practice agree with, and anſwerably are confirmed by the foregoing Diſcourſe, eſpecially ſuch to whom God hath vouchſafed that bleſſing of Children, let me adviſe, and importunately intreat them, yea, in the Name of our Lord Chriſt command them, that they ſatisfie not themſelves in the bare diſcharge of their duty, in regard of the application of Baptiſm to their Seed in their infancy; know that your work is not done when you have brought yours within the verge or under the bond of the Covenant; you will find in the foregoing Papers, that your Seeds inheriting the good which, in

common with you, they are Heirs unto, depends much upon your faithful and wife discharge of your duty towards them, as growing up to years of maturity: *Abraham* must command his Houshold that they keep the way of the Lord, and that to this end, that God might bring upon him the good promised, with reference to his, There is hardly any thing a greater discouragement to Ministers, in pleading for and administring Infant-baptism, than the great neglect of Parents towards their Children, when baptized and grown up to a capacity of understanding and improving their Baptism, afore administred to them; therefore seeing you lay claim to *Abraham*'s Blessing, as his Children, walk in *Abraham*'s steps, both in respect of your own personal faith and holiness, and also in instructing and commanding your Children, that they may keep the way of the Lord: In particular, let them know their priviledge, and the danger of forfeiting of it, by breaking that Obligation put upon them by Baptism.

Thirdly and lastly, As for such who are the Seed of believing Parents, and who by Baptism have been dedicated and given up unto God in Christ, and incorporated into his mystical Body, as visible: Let me advise, perswade and charge them, that they lay no more weight upon their Baptism, in relation to their eternal happiness, than the nature of the Ordinance, and the end of Christ in appointing the application of it, will warrant. Baptism, abstractly taken, infallibly secures Salvation to none; neither can

Baptism

Baptiſm of it ſelf be laid as a ſure ground to bottom a plea for Salvation upon; *He that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not*, however baptized, *ſhall be damned*, is one of thoſe unalterable Decrees laid up in the Records of Heaven: In reſpect of which we may ſay, as *Job* in another caſe of God, *He is of one mind, and who ſhall*, that is, none ſhall, *turn him*, Job 23. 13. Your abiding in and injoying the benefits of the Covenant, into which the Seed of ſuch Parents, you were admitted in your infancy, undiſpenſably requires your perſonal faith and obedience; therefore be faithful in the diſcharge of your duty, and in ſo doing you may, upon ſure grounds, apply and improve your *Baptiſm*, as Gods Seal, infallibly ſecuring your injoyment of the good promiſed.

FINIS.